

ESSAYS AND CRITICISMS

BY THE MILITARY CORRESPONDENT OF

'The Times'

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BY
THE MILITARY CORRESPONDENT
OF
THE TIMES

AUTHOR OF "THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST," "IMPERIAL STRATEGY,"
"THE FOUNDATION OF REFORM,"
ETC.

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ESSAYS AND CRITICISMS

CHAPTER I

THE DEFENCE OF THE EMPIRE *

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

THE moral and material resources of the British Empire are immense and unrivalled. Were they organized for war in a manner corresponding with their mass a lasting peace would be assured.

But war is an affair of activity and movement, and the momentum of a body is the product of its mass and velocity. War comes suddenly in these days, and unprepared nations provoke the aggression of their rivals. The modern nation in arms throws all its living forces into the war-furnace and almost suspends for the time all other forms of activity. For such a nation, in such a situation, the war must be short, sharp, and decisive. If it is not, exhaustion will discount all possible benefits accruing even from successful war.

A hostile Power possessing colonies and a merchant navy must always endeavour to act with the utmost vigour, promptitude, and decision when engaged in hostilities with England. First, in order to take full advantage of the customary unpreparedness of the British Empire throughout the world and of the exposure of British wealth on every sea. Secondly, in order to prevent, as far as possible, the

* From *The Times* Empire Supplement, 24 May, 1909.

paralysis of the oversea trade of the said hostile Power and to bridge over the period so full of danger for its colonies. Thirdly, in order to forestall by rapid and stunning successes the diplomatic action of the British Foreign Office. Unless the adequate resources of the British Empire are organized for war in such manner that they can be effectively employed within limits of time proportioned to the capacity for aggression of hostile forces, the King's Dominions may always be taken at a disadvantage and great issues may be decided before the weight of the whole can be brought to bear.

It should therefore be the object of every statesman within the Empire to ensure that armed forces are not only fully sufficient for defensive purposes, but are also capable of being used for the general service of the Empire in time adequate to the demands of strategy. Strategy, in its turn, must take all reasonably probable contingencies into account, and while remaining deaf to the voice of exaggeration and of panic, must be alert and alive to the constantly changing conditions of the political and military environment.

The power of declaring war is vested in the Crown, and the command-in-chief of all forces within the Empire is exercised by his Majesty or by his representatives. It is the duty of statecraft to choose the hour for a war which is clearly unavoidable, and to fashion forces capable of prolonging policy and of imposing the national will. It is the duty of strategy to employ these forces to the best advantage. In caring for the vital interests committed to its charge statecraft can neither ignore the existence nor neglect the possible hostility of any nation, however friendly. A politician who rules such nation entirely out of account proves to the world that he masquerades in the garb without attaining the stature of statesmanship.

The whole strength of the Empire can only be brought to bear in timely season by a well-considered plan of co-operation for all its parts. Our paramount object must be, as Mr. Chamberlain declared in 1902, to draw closer the

bonds which unite us, and to confirm and establish that Imperial unity upon which the security and the existence of the Empire depend. A common purpose and a common end, as Mr. Haldane told the Imperial Conference in 1907, may be very potent in furthering military organization.

Imperial unity should be the primary object of Imperial statecraft. Combination of military force for a common purpose is the duty of strategy, but strategy will be disarmed unless the bases of Imperial unity have been assured in advance by capable statecraft. Without practical and effective unity, which, in its turn, can only be secured by the representation of self-governing Dominions in the councils of the Empire, the various fractions of the Imperial forces may either hold aloof from a war if the enemy allows them to do so, or may drift slowly, separately, and disjointedly into the field. It is against all probabilities that an enemy will spare any part of the Empire because it is weak.

The preservation of the Empire from assaults external or internal cannot be permanently assured unless every part of it is prepared to fight in a quarrel which may not appear to be its own. This is a hard saying, but upon its acceptance depend the peace and stability of the Empire. It was partly because the people of the nations comprising the Triple Entente had not mastered this root principle of effective combination that Russia was recently compelled to give way before a German ultimatum. The interests of a British community in one part of the globe may not appear to be directly involved in the fortunes or the fate of another community of the same race in another part. Yet if one of these communities be overborne owing to the failure of others to send timely help, the dismemberment of the Empire follows as a natural consequence. When subsequently those members which have held aloof become threatened in their turn they will no longer be able to count upon the aid of all; and threatened they will be, should they allow a rival to discover that the term British Empire is no better than a phrase.

THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE EMPIRE

The land forces of the Empire are exceedingly varied in their composition, conditions of service, and efficiency. In the British Isles there are the Regular Army with its Reserve and Special Reserve, and the Territorial Force, besides cadet corps, rifle clubs, and various other semi-military institutions which might eventually afford useful aid in war. There are, besides, 62,000 police and very considerable numbers of discharged soldiers, militiamen, yeomanry, and volunteers with whom all touch has been unwisely lost by the negligent and wasteful administration of the past. The total of the organized and immediately disposable military forces amounts to about 600,000 men, of whom one-half are liable to oversea service. In India there is the British garrison 75,000 strong and the Indian army of 162,000, both liable to oversea service, besides 34,000 European and Eurasian Volunteers, the Imperial Service Troops, frontier militia, police, and the armies of the feudatory States.

In the self-governing Dominions the greater part of the armed forces is composed of Militia and Volunteers. The permanent force is very small, and constitutes, in most cases, the training staff and little more. In all cases there is a provision for compulsory service in time of war, but in normal times service is exclusively voluntary,* and only in rare cases can a few units of the forces be employed, as they stand, outside their own territories. Rifle clubs and associations flourish and form in some cases an integral part of the defence forces, while cadet corps are numerous and efficient. In the Mediterranean garrisons, Egypt, the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, China, South and West Africa, Mauritius, Bermuda, and Jamaica there are maintained, exclusive of the Egyptian army, 41,000 Regular troops, besides 8000 men of the Indian Army and colonial corps. All told, there exist in the whole of the self-governing and other Dominions, Crown Colonies, possessions, and protectorates, exclusive

* Australia and New Zealand have now adopted a compulsory system.

of India, approximately 200,000 armed men, while the larger Dominions count on doubling at least their forces in time of war.

The total of the accountable military forces of the Empire, excluding the armies of the Indian princes, is close upon 1,200,000 men, of whom less than half, or about 550,000 men, are liable for general service oversea. But as a considerable proportion of the troops in the British Isles are not intended to take part in the first operations oversea, and as again only a part of the Army in India can be similarly employed, the effective force, almost wholly drawn from the British Isles and India, which the Empire can deploy at any point in the initial stage of a war, given a free sea, may be roughly estimated at a quarter of a million of men.

The disparity between the total forces paid and maintained and the effective numbers which can be rapidly assembled at any one point constitutes the radical defect of the Imperial military system. Whereas most Great Powers can place in the field at least five men for every one maintained and paid in peace, we reverse the process, and pay two men for every one nominally available for the general service of the Empire, and five men for every one who can be immediately despatched upon this service. A statesman is needed to unchain the forces of the Empire and to increase, year by year, the number of the troops which can be drawn from every part of the Empire for a common purpose and a common end.

MILITARY SYSTEMS OF THE DOMINIONS

The Imperial forces are tending towards assimilation in organization, armament and tactics, and this tendency will be quickened by the creation of an Imperial General Staff. At the present time there are certain divergences of methods which must be recognized and taken into account.

In Canada, all male inhabitants between the ages of eighteen and sixty are liable for service in the Militia in time of emergency. In New Zealand the same liability is

imposed upon all male citizens aged seventeen to fifty-five, while in Australia compulsion is restricted to times of war only.* In Canada the Militia Council, and in New Zealand the Council of Defence, deal with all military questions and act as Administrative Boards, while in Australia the Council of Defence and the Board of Administration are distinct. The forces of all three Dominions are raised and maintained under their own Militia or Defence Acts.

Australia has six military districts each of which finds a field force and a garrison force. In New Zealand a mixed brigade can be formed by each of the five existing districts. In each Dominion the forces are grouped into commands. Canada and Australia have a brigade organization, and so, in practice, has New Zealand, but Canada is advancing towards the divisional system. Canada and Australia have each a peace and a war establishment, while New Zealand has the same arrangements under another name. As for South Africa, which should afford hereafter very valuable support, all that need be said is that there are at present about 14,000 Militia, Volunteers, and police in the country, but that nothing concerning the future arrangements for defence can well be decided until the Union becomes a fact.

The defence forces of the Dominions are disciplined under their own Acts, and are only subject to the Army Act with certain reservations. In Canada and Australia the forces are so subject when the terms of the Army Act are not inconsistent with their own Militia and Defence Acts, while in New Zealand the forces are only subject to the Army Act when they are serving with Regular troops. In Canada the Active Militia may be called upon to serve beyond the limits of the Dominion for its defence and for no other purpose. In Australia and New Zealand there is no such liability, and in practice, in all three cases, an over-sea force would have to be created in time of war by special enlistments. This is a second fundamental defect, and, so long as the self-governing Dominions allow it to continue, no great store can be set upon the military aid which any one

* For changes, see chapter IV.

of them can provide for the general service of the Empire at short notice. From the Imperial standpoint it is insufficient to maintain forces which cannot be employed until long after a war of average duration is concluded.

THE CANADIAN TYPE

A detailed description of the various forces of the Empire would require a long catalogue which would make dry reading. But one can take a type and select Canada as a fairly representative example of the military tendencies which prevail in the Dominions and of the state of efficiency to which the local forces of the Empire have attained.

Canada, like the other Dominions, recognizes her duty of making a liberal outlay for self-defence, and the progress which she has made in this direction since Sir Edward Hutton's arrival in the country has been very satisfactory so far as it goes. The work done by the present Minister of Militia, Sir Frederick Borden, and by his chief military adviser, Major-General Sir Percy Lake, is worthy of every commendation, and especially because they have thrown no gloss over defects, but have always sought to remedy them so far as lies in their power with the resources placed at their disposal. The plan of the Militia Department is to have 100,000 men in first line and eventually another 100,000 in second line. These figures, in proportion to population, correspond to a million men standard for Great Britain. The permanent force in Canada is far too small. It requires 3311 men to carry out its duties even on the present inadequate basis, but only numbers 2905 men, of whom 1600 are required for the peace garrisons of Halifax and Esquimaux. The Active Militia includes city and rural corps raised by voluntary enlistment for three years' service. The city corps perform their drills locally: only a few of the city infantry corps, and the cavalry, artillery, and departmental units attend annual training for nominally twelve, but actually nine days' instruction at camp. Rural corps have scarcely any training except at the camps. The

training establishment of the Active Militia varies annually and is now about 50,000. In 1908-09, 47,500 all ranks with 8500 horses were present at training.

The training of the Canadian Militia is very poor, but the acquisition of the Petawawa camp and the good results obtained in 1907 from the assembly of practically all the mobile units of the permanent force at this camp afford grounds for hoping that the situation may improve. At present there are not sufficient officers qualified to lead, and there is a want of good battery commanders. The attendance at schools of instruction is unsatisfactory. There is a difficulty in obtaining recruits and the amount of desertion and non-attendance at camps is most regrettable. For the year ending March 31, 1908, the proportion of first-year men in the ranks was 50 to 70 per cent in Ontario, and from 30 to 40 per cent in other provinces. Men would doubtless flock to the colours in time of danger, and the worth of Canadian troops has been proved on many a field. But without organization, discipline, officers, arms, and everything that differentiates an army from a mob, improvisation, in these days, can only magnify disaster and cannot prevent it.

The situation in regard to material and warlike stores, though encouraging, does not yet satisfy the needs of the Active Militia, and allows no scope for expansion. Canada is fortunately becoming self-supporting in all warlike material except guns, while limbers, carriages, and ammunition wagons for the artillery are now constructed locally. There are 166 mobile guns in the country, of which 124 are available for the field, while the re-armament with the 18-pr. Q.F. field-gun is nearly completed up to the limit of the orders given. There are some 82,000 Ross, Lee-Enfield, Lee-Metford, and Martini-Metford rifles in the country, and the reserve of ammunition amounts to 500 rounds per gun, and 400 per rifle. The personal equipment, harness, saddlery, and field ambulances of the Active Militia are fairly complete, but the mobilization stores are deficient, while the provision of horses and wagons on mobilization,

though partly secured by registration, is sure to create dangerous difficulties and delays.

Deducting garrisons from the 103,000 men nominally available for the first line, there remain 90,000 for active defence, of whom 80,000 are east of the Great Lakes and 10,000 to the west. For the latter, little in the way of organization for war has been attempted, but the forces east of the Lakes have been theoretically organized in six divisions and three cavalry brigades. A force of this strength should consist of 60,000 infantry, 7000 cavalry, 15,000 artillery, and 3000 engineers, or, calculating by units, 64 battalions, 12 cavalry regiments, 69 batteries with 276 guns, and 18 companies of Engineers. The Canadian Active Militia has the necessary infantry and cavalry for the projected organization, but there are only 31 batteries of 124 guns, and only four companies of Engineers, while there are some deficiencies in the auxiliary services.

It was estimated in the last-published local Inspection report, that the Active Militia would not be fit to take the field against the disciplined troops of a civilized nation until after a lapse of time varying from seven to ninety days according to arms. As for the second line, all that need be said is that it does not at present exist. Military progress in Canada is on the right lines in some respects, and full justice must be done to the vigour and continuity of policy of the Militia Department, which fights hard to secure efficiency and follows faithfully the lines of the organization of the Imperial Forces. But the faults and defects of the system are patent, and, as the same or other faults recur in the military systems of other oversea Dominions, much remains to be done before these rich and rising communities can play a part in Imperial defence in consonance with their dignity, their importance, and their stake in the business of the Empire.

COMPARATIVE EXPENDITURE UPON DEFENCE

As between the Mother Country and the oversea Dominions of the Crown there is equality of sympathy and

patriotism, but there is not equality of sacrifice or anything approaching to it. Financial sacrifice is not everything, but it is a great deal. It was brought out at the conference of 1907 that the nominal expenditure upon defence was 29s. 3d. per head in the United Kingdom, and from 2s. to 5s. 2½d. per head in the oversea Dominions. It is true that the Dominions spend their money in developing their resources and upon productive public works of all kinds, and it is also true that having amassed less wealth than the Mother Country, they have less to devote to the claims of defence. We have no desire to deal with the Dominions in any huckstering spirit, but now that the Mother Country herself is hard beset, and no longer exercises against all enemies the undisputed sway on every sea that she did but a few short years ago, the oversea Dominions are right to bestir themselves. Their prosperity and their existence are at stake as much as ours, and equality of rights implies equality of duties. The situation has changed, and defensive arrangements must change also. The time has fully come when the oversea Dominions must, in their own vital interests and in those of the Empire, and in proportion to their relative population and resources, take more effective part in the defence of the Empire by sea and land.

On March 4, 1862, when the Report of the Select Committee of 1861 on Colonial military expenditure was under discussion, it was unanimously resolved by the House of Commons :—

“That this House, while fully recognizing the claims of all portions of the British Empire to Imperial aid in their protection against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, is of opinion that Colonies exercising the rights of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security, and ought to assist in their own external defence.”

That the self-governing Dominions are willing to subscribe to this doctrine in the spirit as well as in the letter is proved by their enthusiasm and effective support during the South African war, and by the gratifying evidence of

their desire to help us now in naval defence. But it is also the case that their naval defence has been paralysed by the prevalence of false doctrines on this subject in England, and that practically none of their land forces are under any liability to assist in their own external defence, nor are they in any condition to do so promptly and with effect. The mistakes of British statesmanship in the latter part of the eighteenth century still hang like millstones round our necks, paralysing our leadership on the one hand and on the other rendering the Dominions suspicious of every proposal for effective co-operation. It is the duty of statesmen to break this gloomy spell, for the aspect of the affairs of the world no longer permits insouciance and passivity.

PRINCIPLES OF DEFENCE

Subject to the foregoing considerations, the principles which govern the conduct of the military defence of the Empire are three in number. First, superiority at sea must be assured by the combined action of all parts of the Empire. Secondly, local defence must enable each part of the Empire to withstand all reasonably probable attack until the strength of the whole can be brought to bear. Thirdly, timely co-operation of all the active forces of the Empire for a common purpose at any given point must be assured.

NAVAL SUPERIORITY

It will be obvious to every one that in a scattered and oceanic Empire united by the highway of the sea this highway must be safe, for if it is not neither goods nor troops can pass along it in security, and consequently neither commerce nor war can be conducted with success.

The privileged position which we have occupied for so many years in relation to the sea is passing away, less from our neglect than from the determination of all Great Powers to possess navies which, though individually still inferior to ours, are a menace of the future, and may, in certain combinations, press upon us hardly.

Owing to the direct challenge which has been made to us

by Germany—a challenge which none but the blind can fail to see—and owing to German alliances which are not without serious naval backing, we are compelled to concentrate the greater part of our naval strength in home waters. Further, we are compelled to keep it there, because, owing to the comparative weakness of our land forces, and the evasion of the first duty of citizenship by the mass of our people, we are unable to contemplate with equanimity German naval predominance in the North Sea, even for a week. Germany might to-day or to-morrow send the whole of her navy to the Pacific without seriously uncovering her home territory, because unsupported oversea attack upon an armed nation is an absurdity. We cannot send our Navy away so long as the German navy remains concentrated in its home waters because we are not an armed nation and consequently dare not expose our nakedness. To pretend, in these circumstances, that our Navy covers the seaboard and the maritime traffic of our oversea Dominions against all enemies is an Imperial imposture. Thus the interdependence of armies and fleets is made manifest, and we have to review the situation of our distant and isolated garrisons in a new light and on new principles.

LOCAL DEFENCE

As charity begins at home and self-preservation is the first law of nature, there is not much need to preach the doctrine of local defence. There is too much local defence in the Empire and too little preparation for offensive action, which alone can spare British possessions from the horrors of war. But local defence has its place in a well-ordered plan of strategy, because no people will pass to the attack unless they feel themselves secure at home, while, if local defence is incomplete or wanting, a Power will attack at these points as a diversion and in order to make its enemy experience the sense of his weakness and exposure. Unless such attack can be handsomely met, we may be turned from our offensive plan.

If the oversea Dominions desire to comply with the resolution of the House of Commons and to take more active share in their external defence, the best service they can render is to prepare to take over the naval stations and Imperial garrisons in their respective quarters of the globe. Thus Canada might eventually find the squadron for the North American and West Indian station and garrison Bermuda and Jamaica; Australasia might eventually provide the Eastern fleet and take over Hong-Kong and Singapore; South Africa would naturally find the Cape of Good Hope squadron and garrison St. Helena and perhaps Sierra Leone. A squadron built and manned by India should patrol the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, and India exclusively should find the garrisons in these seas. None of these Dominions, nor India, would, of course, be in a position to undertake such tasks, at all events at sea, until after the lapse of some years, but they might well take this task for their immediate objective and make preparations to attain it.

MILITARY CO-OPERATION

During the Conference of 1902 a suggestion was made by the British Government that a part of the forces of the Dominions should accept liability for oversea service. The strategic object was correct, but the proposal had two fatal defects. First, it would, if carried out, have prejudiced the raising of the general level of efficiency of the whole of the local forces, and might almost have done as much harm as good. Secondly, and more important, the proposal was considered by Canada and Australia to derogate from their powers of local self-government, a matter upon which self-governing British communities are now, and always have been, extremely sensitive. Consequently no definite decision upon this subject was arrived at in 1902.

The handling of this delicate question by Mr. Haldane at the Conference of 1907 was more judicious. The Secretary for War offered no rigid model, but he pointed out the need

for a general conception and explained that forces should be organized in two lines, of which one should be for local defence and the other for the service of the Empire as a whole. He suggested no divergence in the liability or training of these two lines, but left each part of the Empire to work out its plans for itself, strengthening all by broadening the basis of the General Staff and raising it up into an Imperial institution.

Of the four papers submitted by the War Office to the Conference the first showed the obligation resting upon the Dominions to provide local security, and affirmed the duty without defining the manner, of arranging for mutual assistance and for maintaining superiority at sea. The second showed the importance of assimilating war organization as far as possible, and of adopting a uniform nomenclature, so that every military contribution might fit into the existing Imperial organization. The third paper explained the necessity for a common pattern of armament, and for a due reserve of stores in peace, while a fourth and less important recommended that ordnance stores, and especially guns, should be ordered through the War Office.

The Conference, by a resolution, which was carried unanimously, welcomed and cordially approved the statement of the Secretary for War and affirmed the need of a General Staff to advise as to the training, education, and war organization of the military forces of the Crown in every part of the Empire. So much was gained by the Conference of 1907, and the measure of progress on these lines would have been the measure of the capacity of the General Staff to establish a common doctrine throughout the Empire, and of Ministers at the head of defence forces to translate advice into action.

THE COMING CONFERENCE

But it has become apparent since 1907 that neither on sea nor land has effective co-operation been secured, and that, in view of the gravity of the times, a further step in advance has become indispensable. Even if the principal

object of the coming Conference is the direction of the naval energies of British communities into suitable channels, it would be a great disadvantage for debate to be restricted to a single form and expression of power. Every problem of Imperial defence is a conjoint problem of land and sea power, and it should always be considered from this point of view. If this is not done, every sort of mistake is made. Navies become tied to the rôle of coast defence, while armies, instead of co-operating in attack, are disseminated in local defence. A power so situated can only endure war and cannot wage it. The armies of the Empire cannot combine for action unless the sea is free, while the navies can offer no protection to exposed land frontiers and cannot by themselves bring a war to a successful conclusion. For an amphibious Power the strategy of land and sea and the organization to render strategy effective must intertwine. So long as statesmen from the Dominions discuss defence with any single Department of the King's Government, whether War Office or Admiralty, the whole truth tends to become obscured. But the Imperial Defence Committee exists to co-ordinate the work of the Departments, and it is consequently with and through this Committee that defence must be discussed and decisions formed subject to the ratification of the governments concerned.

What we need most of all is plain speaking followed by prompt action. Let us admit, for a beginning, that practically all our schemes of defence, such as the plan of the Defence Committee for the defence of Australia, dated May, 1906, are as dead as Queen Anne. Let us provide for the representation of the self-governing Dominions upon the Defence Committee whenever questions interesting these Dominions are down for discussion, but let us also acknowledge that the temporary presence in Whitehall Gardens of a Minister from the Dominions is not advantageous if, on his return home, he is thrown over by his Government. Let us agree upon the fundamental principles which are hereafter to govern our joint action in all that relates to defence by land and sea, and, having agreed, let us establish

continuity of policy and refuse to be diverted from it by changes of Government at home or overseas. Let us have done with the oily generalities, the clap-trap harangues, and the sentimental vapourings which have formed such a large part of the proceedings of past Conferences and have caused statesmen from the Dominions to declare, on their return home, that it was not worth while to have dragged them half round the world for the sake of such lame and impotent conclusions. We have burnt enough incense before the altar of gush, and the time has come for practical and businesslike decisions.

Our kinsmen of the oversea Dominions are not children. They can bear to hear the truth and must be told it. They look to us for guidance and must not look in vain. They are lacking in nothing but leading. The leading must come from us, and we have hitherto offered little worth mention. We are far more advanced toward co-operation on land than at sea, because the foundations of Dominion armies have been laid, and the structure erected upon them only needs extension and improvement. There are no such foundations for sea power, and the work has to begin from the very commencement, with long views and a clear perception of our future needs. Our object is not so much to wage war as to prevent it. We cannot hope to succeed in either purpose without sacrifice and without effort. Unless the British people at home and overseas prepare all their able-bodied manhood to fulfil the first duties of citizenship, these duties, laid upon all of them by law, cannot be successfully performed. We shall not only not prevent war, but we shall deliberately provoke it, for we shall not possess that formidable reserve of armed strength which can alone render our hostility dangerous, our friendship worth having, and our Empire secure. The active part of the Imperial Army of the future should be made available for the general service of the Empire in a great emergency. If fear of the possible but exceedingly unlikely aberrations of British statesmanship compels self-governing Dominions to remain the ultimate judges of whether their forces should be

employed outside their own territories or not, there is no reason why the liability should not be clearly expressed in their laws. Place before the Englishman the duties of a man and he will act as a man. Confide to him the functions of a mouse and he will act as a mouse.

The time has come for us to admit, with all its consequences, the self-evident proposition that the British Isles are not the only cradle of sea-power or land-power in an Empire whose flag floats on every sea and whose sons govern in every Continent. The time has come for us to announce that we accept with enthusiasm the principle of Dominion navies as of Dominion armies, and that we are ready and willing to promote their growth by every means in our power, convinced that the vital principle of unity of command in a great war, whether on land or sea, will appeal to the common sense of every man worthy of the name in the wide Dominions of the Crown.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPERIAL GENERAL STAFF*

OUR principal Imperial interest, in military affairs, is to apply the moral of the fable of the bundle of the sticks to conditions of the British Empire. The Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 4475] published to-day, containing "Correspondence Relating to the Proposed Formation of an Imperial General Staff," shows how, in the opinion of the Army Council, this can best be done without infringing the rights of which the self-governing Dominions of the Crown stand possessed.

The Imperial Conference which met in London in April, 1907, affirmed the need for a General Staff selected from the forces of the Empire as a whole ; defined broadly the duties of such body ; and laid upon the Chief of the General Staff the duty of making proposals to give effect to the resolutions of the Conference on this subject. These proposals Sir William Nicholson duly made in his very able Memorandum of December 7, 1908, and Lord Crewe, in his despatch of December 24, 1908, forwarded them to the Governors of the King's Dominions Overseas, and expressed the hope of his Majesty's Government that the principles and procedure explained in the Memorandum would meet with acceptance.

The statement made by Mr. Haldane before the Conference of 1907 assumed the maintenance of supremacy at sea ; advocated the adoption by the Empire of a broad plan of military organization, which would take fully into account all local conditions and difficulties ; and suggested that the armed forces of the Empire should be organized in two parts,

* *The Times* of February 20, 1909.

of which the one should be available for the general service of the Empire as a whole, and the other restricted to local defence. These principles are followed in the Memorandum signed by the Chief of the General Staff.

Sir William Nicholson begins with an assumption that the Oversea Dominions feel themselves sufficiently strong to undertake more responsibility for the defence of their own homes, and that they regard this defence not only as a privilege, but as a right. The real problem, in his opinion, is how best to guide opinion in the right direction. It is to supply such guidance that an Imperial General Staff is necessary. Sir William Nicholson divides his Memorandum into four parts. The first deals with the general principles of Imperial defence and with the relations of the parts to the whole : the second suggests the organization required for an Imperial General Staff ; the third considers the best means for selecting and training officers to compose this Staff ; and the fourth investigates the means at present available for the formation of such Staff, and how soon they can be utilized.

Local defence, in Sir William's opinion, must provide security against reasonable initial contingencies ; general defence of any one part by the whole can be provided only by concentration. It remains for the Navy and for local defence to defer the issue until such a concentration can be effected. "No organization for defence can be regarded as adequate or complete which does not contemplate offensive action." That is a cardinal principle of naval strategy, and military strategy must conform with it. But, in order that forces drawn from the several parts of the Empire should be capable of usefully combining their action, Sir William Nicholson considers it indispensable that they should be organized on the same general principles, inspired by a common doctrine, and accustomed to a single system of command and of Staff duties. This ideal, he says, can be realized only if all the parts are organized and trained by one brain, and in the modern Army such brain is the General Staff.

The duties of a General Staff are the efficient preparation of armed forces and their successful conduct in war. A central guiding body is required to "consider and draw up plans for the Empire as a whole, to study and formulate broad principles of general application, and to collect and disseminate information." For this purpose the General Staff must consist of a central body with closely affiliated branches to study local needs and to apply to them the principles formulated by the central body. The head of all this organization can only be the Chief of the General Staff, but the guidance he can give must be compatible with the full control of the local chief of the General Staff by his own Government, and consequently the head in London can, so far as the Oversea Dominions are concerned, only give advice, and not orders.

In these days, remarks Sir William Nicholson, the military art is progressive ; new ideas and inventions demand constant consideration ; and, therefore, close and frequent personal communication between the centre and the branches is necessary to prevent the initiation and growth of divergent opinion which might be fatal to combination. Consequently, he recommends the delegation of selected officers from the centre to the branches, and vice versa, and suggests various means by which this system of inter-communication of personnel and of ideas can most usefully be brought about. He thinks that in a great war the Staff officers of local forces should eventually be drawn from the local General Staff, and those of the supreme commander mainly from the central body. He remarks that officers must possess the confidence of military opinion, and that this can be secured only if a thorough practical acquaintance with the political and military conditions of the Empire is to be found in the officers of the General Staff.

Dealing next with the principles of selection and training, Sir William Nicholson considers that a common standard of military knowledge and uniformity of doctrine can be obtained only by passing selected officers through a Staff College, and he thinks that Camberley and Quetta, in the

absence of any similar institutions in the Oversea Dominions, must for some time to come be recognized as the central schools of higher military education. Later on, he hopes to see the establishment of other local Staff Colleges, and, while considering that training in one or other of these institutions should be the normal means for obtaining admission to the General Staff, he does not exclude the appointment to it of other officers of proved ability and with special qualifications. He hopes that examinations for entrance to the various Staff Colleges may be simultaneous, that the syllabus and curriculum may be identical throughout the Empire, that the principle of alternate Staff and regimental service may be closely adhered to, and that occasional conferences may bring together the leading General Staff officers of the King's Dominions. His ideal is that local forces should eventually become self-supporting in the provision of General Staff officers, but this ideal, he fully admits, can only be achieved in the future, and the evolution of the General Staff of our needs can only proceed gradually and by slow stages.

Passing on to an inquiry into our present means for providing General Staff officers for the Empire, Sir William shows that in the United Kingdom and in India we already possess good and tried machinery for our purpose, but that in the Oversea Dominions, Canada alone excepted, educational establishments do not yet exist even to ground youths in the elementary parts of their military duties, and still less for instruction in the higher branches of the art of war. Consequently he suggests that the provision of such establishments is a pressing need, and meanwhile he hopes that the Dominion Governments will borrow officers from the United Kingdom and India, and also send good officers to be trained at Camberley and Quetta until such time as the local educational establishments are in a position to satisfy local requirements.

If his suggestions prove acceptable, Sir William Nicholson hopes to see identical principles of organization—which have been already fully set forth in Sir Neville Lyttleton's

Memorandum of March 14, 1907, established throughout the Empire ; and he also hopes that uniformity in training and in the practice of Staff duties may prevail. A complete organization, he repeats, can only be built up gradually as qualified officers become available. "The value of continuity in our methods of action," he concludes, "is thus of prime importance, and though the personnel of the Imperial General Staff may change year by year, the spirit in which it is conceived, and which animates all its members, must always remain the same, namely, loyalty to the Empire and to one another, at all times and in all places."

These are wise words, and the whole treatment of this important question by the Chief of the General Staff, and by the Army Council as a whole, is shown by these papers to be broad, comprehensive, and enlightened. The fundamental idea which underlies them all is frank acceptance of the principles of local self-government upon which the Oversea Dominions set such store. We have not always been so well inspired, but now that our eyes are opened and that we invite the co-operation of the Dominions overseas on the principle of equal individual and collective responsibility, we can fairly expect that they will rally round the General Staff in London and give to the principles inculcated by its distinguished chief that hearty support which his Majesty's Government desires and the principles themselves deserve. The Dominion of Canada has already notified its acceptance of these principles, and when Canada falls into line upon an Imperial issue the adhesion of the other great Oversea Dominions can, with some confidence, be expected.

The principles laid down in this, the most statesmanlike paper ever issued by the War Office in modern days, naturally affect the land forces of the Empire alone, since it is only with such forces that Mr. Haldane's department is competent to deal. But they apply with equal weight to the sea forces, and now that more than one of the Oversea Dominions has initiated preliminary measures for the creation of a fleet it would be decidedly advantageous that

the Admiralty should consider whether it might not profitably follow Sir William Nicholson's lead.

Were a naval General Staff created, and were the two Imperial General Staffs of Navy and Army more firmly and closely united by mutual intercourse and by a common doctrine than they are at present, the interests of Imperial defence would be better safeguarded than they are by our existing arrangements.

CHAPTER III

THE FUTURE OF ARMY ORGANIZATION

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ALDERSHOT MILITARY SOCIETY
ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 1909. LIEUT.-GENERAL
SIR H. SMITH-DORRIEN, K.C.B., D.S.O., IN THE CHAIR.

INTRODUCTION

My object in coming here this afternoon in response to your kind invitation is to enable you to express your opinions freely and without reserve upon a subject which must, I think, interest you deeply, however little my treatment of it may appeal to you, namely, the present system of Army Organization and the possibility of future developments.

I do not propose to weary you by wading through all the Statutes, Orders, Regulations, and Instructions which lay down the bases upon which the organization of the Army, whether of First or Second Line, at present rests. With these you are doubtless well acquainted. My intention is to offer a few remarks upon the existing system, and to ask you to say how much of it should, in your opinion, be retained, and how much of it should be changed, and why. I ask you to bear in mind that organization is the act of arranging all the parts of a complex whole in a manner suitable for the most efficient use or service, and that it is according to its success or the reverse in answering to this definition that Army Organization must be judged.

THE REGULAR ARMY AND THE CARDWELL SYSTEM

The Regular Army at home and abroad, with the Army Reserve and the Special Reserve, forms the First Line. The bed-rock upon which this First Line rests is the Cardwell

system, a system which the present Government, in full accord with their military advisers, decided, after a long and careful investigation, to retain.

Soldiers at Aldershot, and in other garrisons at home, are naturally more occupied in overcoming the difficulties than profiting by the advantages of the Cardwell system, owing to the fact that they are continuously engaged in the somewhat heart-breaking work of making soldiers in order to hand them over to somebody else. But when in your turn you go abroad and discover the fine corps of trained soldiers which this system provides in those places where, in time of peace, we have most need of them, you realize that your work at home has not been thrown away. Similarly, when the Army at home is mobilized and completed to war strength by trained Reservists, you see again the finished product of your labours, and no one who remembers the aspect of our Regulars after the mobilization of 1899 will say that any country could have wished for, or could have produced, finer troops.

The advantages of the Cardwell system are so many and so manifest, while alternate systems are so unsatisfactory, that I do not think the time has come for departing from it. It has, or should have, the very great merit, once you obtain parity between the number of units at home and abroad, of placing the question of the line infantry, at all events, outside the arena of party strife. It is automatic in its action. It provides solid and contented regiments in our garrisons abroad if the period of foreign service is not unduly prolonged. Last, but not least, it has proved successful in war, up to, if not beyond, the expectations of the wise men who invented it.

No one has yet been able to suggest an alternative system to meet our needs abroad, whether in peace or war, with equal or nearly equal success, and no system of depots for the supply of drafts shows any appreciable saving in cost unless we disband the greater part of the Army at home, and consequently deprive ourselves of the greater part of the Expeditionary Force which is the police reserve

of the Empire. If we were ready for such a sacrifice, we might save two millions after the lapse of several years ; but part of this would be counterbalanced by fresh capital expenditure on barracks for the new depots, and I do not think that any Minister or any Government with any serious sense of responsibility could contemplate for a moment such a deprivation of political and military power as this sacrifice would entail.

Such things have been known, it is true, as Ministers and such Governments without this sense of responsibility. But we have now, or shall have very shortly, parity between the number of Infantry and Cavalry units at home and abroad, and when a politician, in search of a little fleeting notoriety among the lower orders, seeks to impose fresh disbandments upon the War Office, and to substitute chaos for order, he can be met, and he is met, by such facts, figures, and reasoned arguments, that he is made to look, if possible, more ridiculous than usual. Had not the Cardwell system been in operation during the last few years, we should infallibly have suffered far more serious losses than those which were imposed upon us owing to the failure of a section of the House of Commons to know what it was doing or even to care.

There is another point which people should not neglect when they advocate a departure from the Cardwell system in order to effect reductions in the Regulars at home. When you reduce the latter, you do not reduce your political and military liabilities throughout the world, but you rather increase them, since you encourage your enemies and depress your friends. Then, when you are called upon, as you so often are, to meet these liabilities, you are compelled, in default of Regulars, to fall back upon the Second Line, even in the case of insignificant wars and commotions. It follows inevitably that you are forced, sooner or later, to impose upon this Second Line far higher standards of training, much longer service with the colours, and far more onerous liabilities than your existing organization contemplates, or can contemplate, without revolutionary change.

For these reasons the retention of the Cardwell system is very desirable in all interests, but, if this be so, then it is also desirable that it should be rigorously adhered to, and this touches the responsibility of soldiers very nearly. If, for example, a permanent increase of a half-dozen battalions is required in our garrisons abroad, then it follows that we must raise a similar number at home so that the requirements of the Cardwell system may be fully met. There will usually be a disposition on the part of the Governments to evade this duty, and such a disposition must be strongly resisted. Obviously, the rule would not apply to reinforcements of a temporary character which some local disturbances might render necessary, nor to military operations which might remove, for a longer or shorter term, a part of the Regulars from the United Kingdom. But it should apply—remembering the definition of the term organization—to any and every permanent increase in our foreign garrisons, and we should endeavour by every means in our power to impress this principle upon every civilian War Minister who takes office under the Crown.

I do not propose to describe in detail the organization of the Field Army and of the Divisions, because it is perfectly well known to you. But I am sure you will remember how much we suffered from the want of such an organization a few years ago, and how Generals, Staffs, and troops were hastily thrown together in 1899, as a rule without any previous acquaintance with each other, and told to muddle through. Things are very different now, and although the Special Army Order of January 1, 1907, which laid down the organization of the Regular Field Army in the United Kingdom, attracted comparatively little attention at the time, I should be inclined to give to it, and to the Tables and War Establishments issued with it, a very high place in order of importance among the salutary reforms of the past three years. In the same category I should wish to place the India Army Orders of 1904 and 1907, which carried out a similar work for the Army in India.

THE ARMY RESERVE

Behind the Regular Army there stands the Army Reserve, now some 20,000 men above the normal owing to the former operation of the three years' colour service. You were told by Mr. Haldane's critics, some two years ago, that the Army Reserve had been destroyed, and you were consequently fully prepared to find, two years later, that it was stronger than ever. There are some critics whose conclusions, after you have reversed them, come weirdly near the truth. The Army Reserve is now 135,000 strong, and the normal, calculated by the actuaries, is 115,000, or thereabouts, the exact figure depending, of course, upon establishments, terms of service, and strengths.

There are three points with regard to the Army Reserve deserving of attention. There is first the question of Section D, which is composed, as you know, of men who enlist into or re-engage in it for four years after the expiration of their twelve years' engagement. Section D was closed from July, 1906, to July, 1907, then reopened for a year, then closed again, and lastly reopened to enlistment for Cavalry in December last, and to re-engagement for Horse and Field Artillery, Cavalry, Army Service Corps, and Royal Army Medical Corps up to forty-two years of age. These changes display a certain absence of settled policy, partly, but not wholly, to be accounted for by the temporary inflation of the Army Reserve. Considering that the Reservist is the best and cheapest form of soldier that exists, it is not comprehensible why Section D should be closed to any arm or service while we are enlisting recruits for the same arm or service into the Special Reserve, which supplies an inferior article at a higher cost. It would be more satisfactory that Section D should be open to all arms and services, and should remain so open.

The second point is training. It is difficult to believe that the Army Reserve will be as solid as it was in 1899, so long as it contains a mass of three years' men who will have had no further training during their nine years in the reserve, except a little casual musketry. The difficulty of obtaining

any further training is considerable, but it seems to me that soldiers should say how much further training, from a purely military point of view, the Army Reserve should have, for each arm and service, in order to make the Reservists, and especially the three years' men, efficient when called out.

The third point is the care of the Reservist when in civil life. Regimental associations can do and are doing much, but judging by complaints which reach me, and by evidence which is open to everyone, we have not yet established machinery adequate for dealing with this matter, and it is a subject worth discussing whether the new County Associations would be suitable bodies for organizing employment bureaus for the benefit of old soldiers, or whether some other agency should be preferred.

THE SPECIAL RESERVE

The Special Reserve is now about 70,000 strong. The ages of the men in it are about the same as they were in the Militia, and the quality of the recruits is a little better. The chief function of the Special Reserve is to enable the Army to make good losses incurred during a war, and to that function every other must be subordinated. For this purpose seventy-four Reserve battalions, out of 101 in all, stand behind an equal number of Regular battalions of the line at home, and those seventy-four Reserve battalions will be completed on mobilization by their own resources, and by surplus Army Reservists and young soldiers to a strength of 800 to 1000 men per battalion. They will not be mobile troops, nor does their organization at present contemplate anything higher than the battalion unit. It is the same for the twenty-seven extra Reserve battalions which should, I think, be given a higher establishment * in peace to enable them to relieve Regular units in certain garrisons at short notice.

The Cavalry has no Special Reservists, but it will have a large surplus of Reservists over and above the requirements

* Since carried out.

of its initial mobilization. It should be possible to create a good number of Cavalry regiments of Reserve on mobilization, and these regiments could then perform, for their arm, the same services as are rendered by the Reserve battalions of the Infantry, and by the training brigades to the Artillery. Junior officers are at present lacking for such a plan, but it is possible that this deficiency might be made good. Judging by the tactics and the tendencies of our Cavalry, the Cavalry Division will not have an unduly prolonged lease of life in war unless it has behind it the means whereby considerable losses can be made good both in men and horses.

The Artillery has at present eight batteries of Horse and thirty-three of Field Artillery surplus to the needs of the Field Army, but if howitzer brigades are supplied to the two Divisions which are still without them, there will remain only twenty-seven field batteries, or nine Training Brigades, instead of eleven. It is not quite clear that the number of nine for the Training Brigades would then be final. One to each Division, or six in all, appears adequate, and the three brigades left over I should like to see converted into service units of Mountain Artillery, one of those brigades being of Mountain Howitzers. It is a defect of our organization that we have no Regular pack batteries except in India, and the time may very well arrive when the want of this branch may be severely felt. It is necessary in these days to justify the existence of all units which we desire to retain, and this can only be done by allotting them a definite rôle in a settled organization. A suitable rôle for the surplus Horse Artillery batteries might be that of corps artillery to the main body of troops formed for the defence of the United Kingdom on the departure of the Field Army. It is also necessary to remember that we have only eleven Horse Artillery batteries in India for forty-nine British and Indian Cavalry regiments, quite apart from any Mounted Infantry formations, so that both from a British and an Indian point of view the retention of those eight batteries is eminently desirable.

At present the training brigades are making good, as fast as they can, the deficiency in strengths compared with War Establishments in the Field Artillery, and by no other method could we have made good this deficiency so soon. It is not certain, however, that we have discovered the best solution of this part of our problem. An alternative plan* is to reduce the number of Artillery Special Reservists to 6000 ; and to add 5000 three years' men to the establishments of the Artillery at home, over and above the 9600 six years' men they need to find the drafts, thereby reverting to a system which Lord Lansdowne introduced into the Infantry with good effect.

In this case, suppose we have six training brigades only, each would have 1000 Special Reservists to train, and might be organized on the basis of a divisional ammunition column, for which it would largely find the personnel, while its Commanding Officer would mobilize the column and command it in war. Then, however, there comes in the question of the thirty-one units of Royal Field Reserve Artillery, and of whether they should be amalgamated or abolished. This is a complex and difficult matter to arrange to the satisfaction of all interests involved, but I think we must adopt the system which can be shown to be best for the training, efficiency, and completion of establishments of the Artillery as a whole. The training brigades must, in any case, carry on for another three years ; that is to say, until the short-service men, if we decide to take them, begin to pass to the Reserve. If we introduce this system, we must enlarge, and perhaps increase to six,† the present depots of the Artillery, so that they may be competent to make good the wastage of war in the Field Army, and to handle the men who flow back from the war. Considering that the Field Army includes 27,000 Field Artillery, a large and efficient depot service will be indispensable to this branch in time of war.

The endeavour to create a Special Reserve for the Army Service Corps and Royal Army Medical Corps is of so recent

* Since carried out.

† Since created.

an origin that little can usefully be said of it, except that unless you create corps which *are* corps and have a local habitation and a name, unless you offer fair chances of promotion, and permit men to pass on into the Regular Army, I am doubtful if you will attract many recruits to the Special Reserve, no matter of what service or what arm. There is no inducement for recruits to enlist into what is called a "pool." The only pool that ever attracted anybody was the Pool of Bethesda, and even in that case the attraction was exclusively confined to cripples.

It is certainly a matter of urgency to make good a deficiency which exists in the Auxiliary Services of the First Line, but the reason why these deficiencies are supposed to exist are worth your attention. If you look at the table in the pocket at the end of the War Establishments, you will find that the Army Service Corps, for example, has 4551 all ranks on an imaginary line of communications, and 944 left at the imaginary base, or 5495 all ranks all told. I find it difficult to believe that we require such numbers, nor can I name a theatre of war where the rearward services laid down in the War Establishments would be needed. They would not be required in India, nor in Egypt. If we were fighting in Europe, alongside an ally, the details left at the base would be best left in England, while railways and steamships would permit the rapid transport of men, stores, and supplies from England to the front, and of sick and wounded from the front to England. It would not be a bad thing to do to disencumber our lines of communication and base of a large part of the 30,000 men all ranks who are allotted to them in the War Establishments, and I should look to a revision of these establishments, and to the gradual introduction of Mechanical Transport, to lessen the strain upon recruiting for the Army Service Corps, caused by the apparent necessity of making up numbers which may not be required.

There is one point which concerns the Special Reserve as a whole. The Regular troops have their great traditions, and the Territorial troops have the county and the local

influences to back them. The Special Reserve has neither one nor the other, and it is necessary, since this Reserve now exists mainly for the benefit of the First Line, that Regular officers should pay the utmost attention to it, should encourage it by every means in their power, and should seek to identify its interests with their own. I think that the Reserve units should be given the badges, battle honours, and distinctions of the Regiment to which they belong,* and should be, as far as possible, on the same footing in every particular. The Special Reserve can only be neglected by Regular officers to the detriment of their own vital interests in war, and nothing that Generals, Staffs, and regimental officers can do to promote the content, efficiency, and self-esteem of the Special Reserve will be labour wasted.

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE FIRST LINE

Subject to the possibility of some variations in the Special Reserve, particularly of the Artillery, it appears to me that we must regard the whole of our First Line organization as now definitely settled, and that no further experiments should be made with it. We must endeavour to raise the line Infantry battalions at home to 800 rank and file, and the battalions in the Colonies to the same establishments as those in India, but we must be careful not to exceed the resources of the recruiting market which remains limited, even though we have had two good years in 1907 and 1908. It is better to remain well within your recruiting resources and to seek for quality and higher standards, than to strain your recruiting resources and find yourself compelled to reduce your standards or go short in numbers. We are approaching the moment when we shall, I hope, have secured stability of units and effectives, with terms of service suited to our needs. The whole of this organization is based upon the Cardwell system, which is the Magna Charta of the Regular Army, as well as the best protection that the people of this country can secure, not only against attacks from within

* This has now been done.

and without, but against themselves. I need scarcely add that the voluntary principle is, and always will be, indispensable for the First Line.

THE SECOND LINE

Before passing on to the consideration of the future of the Second Line, it is necessary to notice the fallacy that you can meet the needs of Empire and of a great war with the First Line alone. It has taken the country about forty years to detect this fallacy, and many people have not detected it yet. With existing units and establishments you require 38,000 recruits annually to keep up the strength of the First Line. Judging by past recruiting returns, it is not probable that you can increase this figure very materially in normal times. Nothing that you can do, and no finessing that you may resort to, with the terms of service to which you stand committed in order to supply your garrisons overseas, will enable that number of recruits to go far to produce the large numbers which a great national danger will render necessary. It was for this reason that the Elgin Commission advocated, though without pointing out how it should be done, the expansion of the Army "outside the limits of the Regular Forces of the Crown," and the creation of a Territorial Force with a serious organization is the first attempt made to follow that advice.

In place of a heterogeneous mass of non-mobile units, mainly Infantry and Garrison Artillery, provided by the Volunteers a year ago, we are now well forward with a Second Line of fourteen Infantry Divisions, fourteen Mounted Brigades, and Army Troops, on the line of the Regular organization, while two-thirds of the establishments laid down for this force have been found within nine months. That is not bad for a beginning, and it is possible that the numbers and equipment of the troops may be completed within a year or two. The Territorial Force will then possess what the Volunteers never possessed, namely, an excellent organization, Regular officers for the command and Staffs of the larger units, Field Artillery, Field Com-

panies of Engineers, Medical, Transport, Supply, and other services. No one can say that our Second Line will not have benefited enormously by these reforms, and that the Territorial Force will not be a suitable foundation upon which we can build any form of national Army that we please.

We have, however, been guilty of one trifling omission. We have forgotten Ireland. We have, indeed, statutory powers to extend the organization of the Territorial Force to Ireland, but, except for the North and South Irish Horse, which belong to the Special Reserve owing to the customary topsy-turvyness of everything Irish, we have done nothing hitherto to create in Ireland the framework for our future National Army. I do not underrate the difficulties and objections which present themselves, but I hope we may not be deterred or intimidated by them, for when we pass on to national training we shall at once perceive that Ireland cannot be left out. I should like to see a North Irish Territorial Division, with head-quarters at Belfast, and a South Irish Division, with head-quarters at Cork, and I should anticipate many useful lessons in battle tactics from the first manœuvres between these opposing forces. However this may be, I should like to go forward, for we shall not be able to say that our National Army is complete until we have achieved the happiness of defending Ireland by Irishmen.

I ask you to consider what we should have done had the ideals of the National Service League been placed upon the Statute Book instead of the Territorial and Reserve Force Act last year. We should have first laid down our plan of organization. We should have built head-quarters, riding-schools, and storehouses; collected materials of war of all kinds for the different arms and services; have endeavoured to attract the *cadres* of the former Volunteers; and have distributed Regular officers and non-commissioned officers among the Commands, Staffs, and Regiments. But what else have we been doing for the past year? And as for the first year's contingent, which do you think is best for a beginning and a foundation, the 130,000 totally

untrained men, which the League anticipates, or the 200,000 men, many of them already trained up to Volunteer standards, which the Territorial Force now possesses ?

The more you allow practical politics to weigh with you, the more you will perceive that in the creation of our National Army of the future we must proceed by stages, and that we can only proceed so far and so fast, in each successive stage, as the slowly dawning intelligence of the community permits. The British public likes to think things out for itself in its own good time, and you must help it to think, rather than try to drive it into precipitate action against its inclinations. There is no hope that I can see, unless certain steps, to which I shall presently allude, are taken by soldiers, that National Training will become a vital political issue in the immediate future, greatly though the education of the country is advancing in this matter. Whether it will be two years, or five years, or ten, before the country wakes up, no one can tell. But meanwhile we cannot but profit, and facilitate the execution of the next reform, by creating a solid and popular foundation upon which our people can safely erect a National Army when they please. That is what we are endeavouring to do ; that is why the Army Council, all our leading Generals, and all the best elements of the country gentlemen and the population in the counties and the great towns, are working their hardest to consolidate this foundation. Those who are working the contrary course will be regarded ten years hence as the stupidest people of our day. That is saying a good deal, but if you want to build a house you must start with the foundations, and the man who endeavours to destroy the foundations of his house is not fit to be at large. I daresay that some of the critics, somewhere at the back of the beyond of their minds, have a hazy idea of what they want, though personally I will not vouch for it, but there is one thing better than to know what you want, and that is to know how to get it, and it is to this point that I wish to direct your particular attention, because in this great battle which is before us—the decisive battle

for national and military efficiency—it is the soldiers who must not only stand together but must lead.

The three great and admitted defects of the Territorial Force are :—(1) Want of trained officers ; (2) want of numbers ; and (3) want of training. The first defect is being made good by schools, classes, and instructional courses in the various Commands, and we have now so many good and keen Regular officers serving with the Territorial Force that we can fairly hope to see steady progress in the professional acquirements of the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, especially among the younger men. Until we can obtain national training, there is no work into which we can put our money with greater advantage than that of the professional education of the *cadres* of the Second Line.

In numbers the outlook is less pleasing. What chance have we of reaching the million men standard which Field-Marshal Lord Roberts considers necessary ? We have obtained the voluntary services of 207,000 good men, and the numbers are slowly but still steadily rising. There may be a drop at the end of March, but it is still on the cards that we may complete the establishments within a couple of years,* and meanwhile it is time that we set to work, as I think we ought to have done long ago, to create a Reserve of men who have already passed through the ranks of the Second Line and are willing to rejoin in time of danger. But, unless recruiting for the Territorial Force and its future Reserve by far exceeds the most sanguine expectations, there is little hope, with voluntary service, of obtaining the numbers which Lord Roberts requires, nor possibly even half of them.

So far as the training is concerned, you are aware that the Territorial Force is only summarily trained, and that the finishing touches, and something more, are relegated to a period after embodiment has taken place, and this may mean after war has broken out. It is not supposed, nor has it ever been suggested by anyone in authority, even in an

* In March, 1911, we were still 44,000 short of the establishment.

after-dinner speech, that, judged by your standards at Aldershot, the Territorial Force, or any part of it, is now, or can become, perfectly efficient in time of peace ; but it is expected that all parts of it may be so well trained, organized, and administered, that they may become efficient some months after embodiment has taken place. When I spoke in this room two years ago, I suggested that the time would come when we should not be contented with this limited peace training, and I think now that if, in the opinion of the competent authorities, the Territorial Force may conceivably be opposed by trained foreign troops during the first few weeks of a war, the consideration of this question can no longer be deferred.

Who are the competent authorities, and whose business is it to move in this matter, and to enlighten the Government first and the public afterwards ?

If you look to political leaders for enlightenment, I fear you may look in vain, because in military affairs the distinguishing characteristic of modern political leadership is absence of leading. Neither Leagues nor Associations, nor popular meetings, nor even the Press, though they can all do a great educational work, can produce action, and it is action we want and not talk. None of these influences can bring things to a point, because the real situation can only be judged by the trained soldiers at Head-quarters, who alone have all the evidence upon which judgment can be pronounced, and the authority necessary for pronouncing judgment. So far as numbers are concerned, the judgment rests, in the first instance, with the General Staff, which had, among the duties allotted to it by the War Office Reconstruction Committee, "Military policy in all its branches," or, according to the terms of the Special Army Order of September 12, 1906, the direction of "general policy in Army matters." I ask you, what is there that concerns more vitally this general policy than the question whether any part of the Army is equal, in numbers and in training, to our needs ? So long as the General Staff, by a silence which implies consent, leads the Government and

the public to believe that the existing establishments of the Territorial Force are adequate for our needs, it remains responsible before the country for any deficiencies in numbers which may hereafter be discovered under stress of war. When Mr. Haldane brought in the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill, and fixed the establishments of the Territorial Force at about 300,000 men, you may perhaps remember that he admitted that he "had not yet been able to work out the standard of the requirements of the Empire." You will therefore see that these establishments have no necessary correspondence with the strength required in the Second Line. The General Staff was created with the express purpose of giving the best expert advice upon this subject, and I submit very respectfully—for no one has a higher opinion of the work which is being done by the General Staff under its present distinguished chief than I have—that considering the time which has elapsed since the General Staff was formed, and the thorough examination which has been made, both by the General Staff and by the Committee of Imperial Defence, into our strategic requirements, the moment has almost come for Sir William Nicholson's Department to speak out.

The Defence Committee has now examined the chief strategical problems of the British Empire one by one, and, so far as the general survey is concerned, it will finish its long labours within the next two months. All this work should, of course, have been done long ago, but the point is that as the result of these inquiries the General Staff should be able to lay down, and I trust will lay down, the requirements of the land defence of the country, and of the Empire. You are well aware that the General Staff has no power to enforce its opinions on such a subject. Like the Defence Committee itself, it is only an advisory body on larger questions of policy, and the decisions rest entirely with the Government. But, until the General Staff has given advice, and until it has expressed its opinions in the clearest and most convincing terms, no Minister and no Government can take action, no further increase in the establishments

of the Territorial Force can usefully be suggested, the public remains uninstructed, and consequently no progress towards the higher stage of development for the Second Line can take place.

Next, who is responsible for giving advice concerning the sufficiency or insufficiency of the training of the Territorial Force? This duty appears to fall, in the first instance, upon the General Staff again, because, in the Army Order which I have quoted, "the training and preparation of the Army for war" are described as part of the functions of the General Staff. But it is not possible to dis sever the General Officers Commanding-in-Chief in Great Britain from responsibility in this matter, first, because, apart from the general duties which rest upon them in virtue of their office, they have certain statutory obligations in the matter, under Section XV of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of 1907; and secondly, because, under the new financial system of control, which is one of grants in aid and payment by results, certificates are required from these same General Officers concerning the efficiency of the Territorial units, and of the men in them. It is therefore to them, subject to the initiative of the General Staff, that we must look for guidance. We must look also to the Inspector-General of the Forces. It is obvious that, by virtue of the duties he performs, the Inspector-General acts as the eyes and ears of the Army Council, and that as no one can form a better opinion than he of the efficiency of the Second Line as a whole, the Army Council must be greatly influenced by his opinion and advice on the subject of training. It is therefore for the Generals and for the Inspector-General, but always subject to the initiative of the General Staff, to say whether the training of the Second Line is, or is not, sufficient in the strategical hypotheses suggested by the General Staff in the papers which they issue to Commands. As in the question of numbers, so also in that of training, no Minister can approach the House of Commons and initiate a fresh advance until the General Staff leads the way.

You are probably aware that under Sections XIV and

XV of the Act of 1907, and subject to the approval of Parliament, the training of the Territorial Force can be extended, if an Order in Council so directs, indefinitely for recruits, and up to thirty days for Annual Training. But there is, in my opinion, no chance of profiting by these powers in normal times, so long as voluntary service is retained, unless we go to the unemployed, who are precisely the men who are not wanted in the Second Line, which must incorporate the better elements of the population at all costs. An Army which fails to incorporate the physical and intellectual best of the people is not a National Army at all. If you extend the present periods of training, and preserve voluntary enlistment, you practically forbid these better elements to enlist. As I have said a hundred times, and must go on saying, the conditions of employment, and the close cutting of trade rivalries, inexorably prevent the great majority of masters from giving leave to their men for more than the eight, or at most fifteen, days' camp laid down in the Act. People who disparage the Territorial Force on account of its inadequate training, but are not prepared to face the consequences which necessarily follow, if they are correct, are the most useless of all critics. The sole result of increasing the periods of training, while preserving voluntary service, will be to dry up the recruiting of the better elements at its source.

It therefore appears to me that if the General Staff considers that the Second Line may have to meet trained troops during the first weeks of a war, and that its establishments should be largely increased; and if, again, the General Staff, advised by the General Officers Commanding-in-Chief and the Inspector-General, is of opinion that the training is not adequate to enable the Second Line, superior in numbers though it may be, to encounter trained troops, with a reasonable prospect of success, there is no escape from the conclusion that the time for National Training has arrived.

But what do you mean by National Training, and what sacrifices will it entail? I see no reason to dissent from the view of the National Service League that it means from three

to four months' initial training during the summer in camps for recruits, and a fortnight's training annually afterwards for a short term of years, but I should deplore any measure which deprived the Second Line of the evening drills and week-end camps, which form such important features of the present training. The annual contingent of recruits expected is about 130,000 men, but the figure will depend entirely upon the physical and other standards laid down, and the character of the exemptions. It is believed by those who have examined into the matter, that the cost of this reform will not exceed two and a quarter millions additional to the present estimates. On this point I offer no opinion at present, but it is certain that the Government estimate of twenty millions is based on totally different assumptions from those of the plan to which I have alluded, and I have not yet observed any serious inclination on the part of the Government to examine this question upon its merits.

I am not disposed to think that it would be wise to go very much beyond this plan, for if we do, the First Line is likely to suffer for the benefit of the Second. In this connection it would be desirable that Army Estimates should in future be divided into two parts, corresponding with the expenditure upon the First and Second Line, so that the allocation of monies to each of these grand divisions may be fully apparent.

If you desire to go beyond the limits which I have roughly indicated and to train a larger contingent for six months or a year, you will assuredly get a more solid Army of Second Line ; but I do not think you will be able, on account of the cost, to maintain, alongside such an organization, the Regular Army at home as it now exists. You will run into heavy initial and recurrent expenditure. You will be forced to offer the taxpayers some compensation. You will have to feed your garrisons abroad from depots, and to lower the vitality and alter the character of the Army abroad. You will have to convert the Regulars abroad into local forces, a proceeding which would, I think, be very unpopular with all ranks, and to turn over to your new National

Army at home the officers and non-commissioned officers from the home Regulars, who will be gradually disbanded. Since, in this case, you will have no support for your garrisons abroad, except your new short service National Army, you will of necessity be compelled, whether you like it or not, to impose upon this National Army liability for service abroad at all times and in all places, a service to which an Army of this character would be peculiarly ill-adapted. Such changes would be so revolutionary, would so utterly alter the character of the Army as we know it, and would probably entail such a long transitional period of extreme military weakness, that I am not convinced that we should look further at present than to a plan which will give us the men we need, more highly trained, and at the same time enable us to retain intact the existing organization of the First Line.

Can we count upon the Second Line, whether in its present shape or in that to which I have referred, as an Army of expansion outside the British Isles as well as within? The Second Line, as you know, is based upon the hearth and home idea, and no National Army can be created on any other basis under a voluntary system. For purposes of home defence an Army of expansion is already assured. But the Territorial Force is essentially a Militia, and I agree with Lord Esher, who suggests in his article on "Territorial Dynamics," in the current number of the new magazine, *National Defence*, that there is no reason why the Territorial Force, composed as it is of young and active men of a superior stamp, should not, provided supremacy at sea is not in dispute, volunteer by units for foreign service in case of serious emergency, and perform as good service abroad as the Militia of old, or better. The possibility of such employment was mentioned from the Government side of the House of Commons during the debates on the Bill last year, and I confess that I am unable to picture the First Line in difficulties abroad, and the Second Line content to remain passive at home. Consequently, I do not think we need be intractable for the present on this question of express

liability to serve abroad, or, to put it in another way, it is a more pressing matter for the moment to forge the weapon of our needs than to wrangle over hypothetical questions of its ultimate use.

The case, no doubt, would be exceptional where the intervention of the Second Line would be required, since the Regular Field Army should prove sufficient for our purposes, except in a first-class war. If we passed on to National Training in the Second Line it would be easier, on the whole, to use it as an Army of expansion abroad in a great emergency, because each generation in its turn would incur the liability to defend the country for a short term of years, and it would represent an easier and more natural process for a Government to send such an Army oversea than one constituted on a purely voluntary basis.

THE IMPERIAL ARMY OF THE FUTURE

Let me, in conclusion, say that there is opening before us an even wider horizon than that to which I have, however imperfectly, directed your attention this evening. We have a great and self-governed Empire growing up under the British Flag. It is our duty to set this Empire the example of national effort, and to establish from all its component parts an Imperial Army inspired to the attainment of a common end by an Imperial General Staff. "It is not too much to hope," said Sir William Nicholson at the Guildhall last November, "that at no very distant date, and without interfering in the slightest degree with the authority and responsibility of the respective Governments of the Oversea Dominions, the component units of his Majesty's Army may be welded into one comprehensive whole, and that we may have an Imperial Army, animated by the same traditions and sentiments, amenable to the same discipline, organized and trained, so far as circumstances will permit, on the same lines, and ready, if need be, to operate to the same end." The Chief of the General Staff added that there were two main objects to be kept in view in the development

of this Imperial Army. "First, its component parts should be so organized as not to entail an excessive or extravagant yearly expenditure in peace time, and secondly, that it should possess a capacity for rapid expansion, should the necessity arise, sufficient in conjunction with the Navy to meet, and *amply* to meet, the defensive requirements of the Empire."

Towards these great ideals we have taken a long step forward during the last few years. Both the Army in India and the Army at home are now suitably organized in self-contained Divisions, including all arms and services. We have six of these at home very nearly complete, and nine in India also well forward. We might raise another Division, in case of need, from the Mediterranean and South African garrisons, after providing certain services which are deficient. That would give us sixteen Divisions in First Line, or thirty in all, including the Territorials when they are complete. There are also many military eggs in our Colonial incubators, in South Africa no less than in Canada and Australasia, but we must not count the chickens before they are hatched. If the Oversea Dominions give us whole-hearted support, the time may come when they may provide another fifteen Divisions, at least, in the common cause, making forty-five in all. This is an ideal for the future, and I mention it in order to direct your attention to the fact that the first man who realizes the power of the Empire, and organizes it, will make things unpleasant for anybody who collides with us.

But these ideals cannot wholly be attained until the Motherland sets the example to, and provides the model for, her sons, by accepting definitely and once for all a suitable and a settled Military policy, and by insisting upon the continuity of this policy in days to come. I think that, thanks to Mr. Haldane and his official Military advisers, and subject to the settlement of certain points which I have mentioned to-night, we have secured this settled policy for the First Line and for the foundations of the Second. We have only to ask Mr. Haldane's successor, first, that the

continuity of this policy may be preserved ; and secondly, if the General Staff considers that neither the numbers nor the training of the Second Line is adequate, that the keystone of national training in the Territorial Force may complete the arch of system and security which Mr. Haldane's indefatigable labours have raised.

CHAPTER IV

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE*

I

It will be within general recollection that Mr. Deakin and his party in Australia adopted the principle of compulsory military training in 1907, and that Sir Thomas Ewing introduced a Bill to give effect to their proposals. Neither this Bill, nor the Fisher-Pearce scheme which followed, became law. But Australia had become convinced that the defence of the country was not only the duty but the privilege of a free people, and it was with the practically unanimous consent of Australia that the Deakin-Cook scheme became law in December last.

A difficulty arises in attempting to forecast the consequences of this Act—namely, that it became law before Lord Kitchener's arrival in Australia, but will require amendment if his proposals are to be carried out.

It is apparently the intention of the Commonwealth Government to accept these proposals in their entirety, but in Coalition Governments there is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip, and the proposals represent, even more than appears on the surface, a considerable change of plan. They apparently entail, though no mention is made of the fact, the gradual disappearance of the highly paid and voluntarily enlisted Militia which occupies a prominent place in the Deakin-Cook scheme. They substitute a professional for a semi-professional corps of officers, and they demand compulsory training from men aged twenty to twenty-six, whereas, under the provision of the Defence Act, these men were only liable to compulsory service in war.

* From *The Times* of April 16, 18, and 22, 1910.

These circumstances, and the vagueness of certain among the arrangements proposed by the Act, render it difficult for anyone at home to express a final judgment upon the new course which Australia is taking in military defence. But, on the other hand, this new course is of the utmost interest to the Mother Country and her daughter nations, for Australia is leading the way upon a path, or rather through a pathless bush, beset with difficulties on every side, and it will be necessary for us to follow her advance sympathetically and step by step, so that we may learn by her experience and profit by her mistakes.

THE DEFENCE ACT, 1909

The Defence Act of 1909 is an amending Act, and its provisions are unintelligible to anyone who does not possess the text of the preceding Acts of 1903 and 1904. The Defence Act of 1903, as amended by that of 1904, is referred to by the new Act as the Principal Act, but in future the Principal Act, as amended by the Defence Act of 1909, will be cited as the Defence Act, 1903-9.

The system introduced by the new law was by no means one of compulsory military training pure and simple, though it must gradually become so if Lord Kitchener's proposals find favour. The law accepted and even desired to increase the existing Militia at high rates of pay, and only supplemented this force by the compulsory training of cadets and youths from 12 to 20 years of age. It laid down that all male inhabitants of Australia who had resided in the country for six months should be liable to be trained as follows :—

(a) From 12 to 14 years of age in the Junior Cadets for 120 hours during the year : chiefly physical exercises, with marching drill, miniature rifle shooting, and no uniform.

(b) From 14 to 18 years of age in the Senior Cadets, for four whole-day drills, 12 half-day drills, and 24 night drills : in battalions, elementary military training and rifle shooting.

(c) In the Citizen Forces from 18 to 20 years of age for 16

whole-day drills, including eight in camp: artillery and engineers for 25 days, of which 17 in camp.

(d) At the age of 20 compulsory training was to cease, but men were to be liable for compulsory service in war time and were to attend one muster parade annually.

It was proposed that Cadet training should begin on July 1, 1911, and adult training on July 1, 1912. The Cadets were to serve without pay, but adults were to receive 21s. a week in camp at the age of 18, and 28s. a week at the age of 19. It was anticipated that there would be 115,000 Cadets and 37,000 adults under training by the year 1913-14, in addition to 28,000 voluntarily enlisted Militia, aged 20 to 23, paid at the rate of 56s. a week.

NORMAL ORGANIZATION

The organization projected by the Law was not its strongest point. In June of last year there were in existence 1000 permanent troops, mainly Artillery, 16,621 Militia, and 4923 Volunteers, or 22,544 men all told. If the whole of the Volunteers were to accept conversion, there would be required from 6000 to 7000 additional men to make up the 28,000 Militia which were to form, and seemed likely to continue to form, the backbone of the body military. Of this Militia 16,926 men aged 20 to 23 were to be allotted to the Field Force, 9074 men to Garrisons, and 2000 officers and sergeants to a Second Line. The Field Force was to be completed by 15,500 youths aged 19 to 20, who were thus to serve in this Force for only one year, while 15,500 youths aged 18 to 19 went to the Second Line, in which they also served for one year under the 2000 officers and sergeants of the Militia. Thus between the ages of 17 to 20 a youth would serve in three different categories of troops, under three different sets of chiefs. The Second Line in particular, composed of one contingent of youths aged 18 to 19, serving for one training under Militia *cadres* which might or might not be found, was lacking in any conspicuous merit. However, there was a First Line with its Field Force and Garrisons, and a Second Line of the kind described. By

the year 1921-22 it was estimated that there would be 66,000 men under training, 80,000 men in a First Reserve, and 60,000 Rifle Clubmen. This made up a grand total of 206,000 men. The chief defects of these arrangements, apart from the shortness of the training periods, were the cessation of all compulsory training at the age of twenty, the absence of clear thinking concerning the provision of professional officers, the quaint ordering of the Second Line, the want of territorial delimitation, and the apparently permanent intermixture of voluntarily enlisted Militia and compulsorily trained youths serving at different rates of pay.

PENALTIES

It is laid down in the Defence Act that at the end of each annual training in the Senior Cadets or Citizen Forces each man shall be classified as efficient or non-efficient. Those failing to attend or not becoming efficient are required to attend for equivalent additional training for each year in which they are not efficient. Any employer who prevents or attempts to prevent any employé from rendering the personal service required of him, or penalizes or reduces the wages of, or dismisses such man, is liable to a penalty of £100. A person who evades service is liable to a penalty of not more than £100 nor less than £5, and he may also suffer imprisonment, and becomes ineligible for employment in the public service of the Commonwealth. All persons employed upon sea-going vessels registered in Australia and upon vessels engaged wholly or partly in the coastal or inter-State trade of Australia are subject to the provisions of the Act.

EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions from training are not numerous, but they may be extended if Lord Kitchener's advice is followed. They are at present confined to persons medically unfit, to those "not substantially of European origin or descent," to school teachers who have qualified as instructors of Cadets, and to members of the permanent forces. No bad

characters or criminals are allowed to serve. The Governor-General may exempt from training all persons residing within any specified area, and he may vary, extend, or withdraw such exemption.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT

All male inhabitants of Australia who have resided therein for six months have to register themselves, or be registered by parents or guardians, during the month of January of the year in which they reach the age of fourteen. Allotment to the several arms and corps, including the Navy which has priority of choice, follows registration, and all persons forbidden by the doctrines of their religion to bear arms are, so far as possible, allotted to non-combatant duties. A person who registers has to notify his address and any subsequent change of address.

MILITARY COLLEGE

Finally, it was laid down in the Act that there should be established a Military College, but its form lacked definition, and it remained for Lord Kitchener to give it both form and substance. A school of Instruction for Non-Commissioned Officers was also established by the Act, and it was laid down that all future appointments of instructors should be made from amongst those who had qualified at this school.

THE EXISTING SITUATION

In forming a judgment upon this Act and upon the general question of Australian military reform, we must remember the state of destitution in which Australia stood, and still stands, from a military point of view. She had some 9000 to 10,000 garrison troops, and required 16,000 to defend nine separate fortified places, from 300 to 2000 miles apart. She had a Field Force 14,000 strong which, after supplying the deficiency in the garrison troops, had only 8000 men distributed in six different places. This Field Force, after spending some weeks or months in completing its numbers from the Rifle Clubmen, and its equipment and

transport from the resources of the country, might have become 32,000 strong, but would have been distributed in six places over a line 6000 miles long. "We have," said Mr. Cook, in his speech of September 21 last, "no organized reserves; we have no organization in which to fit the men. . . . We have no modern defence organization."

There is no doubt that the Act would have supplied the numbers lacking and would have enabled Australia not only to defend her fortified ports with greater vigour, but eventually to provide a larger Field Army which would have been available for the general defence of the country and also for Oversea service in case of need. The Act made no extravagant claim upon the people. The application of the Act extended only to 60 per cent of the young manhood of Australia. The Commonwealth Government proposed to mark out certain city and town circles, each with a radius of five miles, and a population of at least 3000, and to restrict the operations of the Act to these circles or areas. This was as much as the Government thought that it could manage for the moment, though the plan had of course the disadvantage common to our Territorial system at home, of leaving large blocks of country districts practically untouched.

The scheme had merits, and of these the first and greatest was the affirmation of a grand principle and its first practical application to a self-governing British community. But viewed as a fundamental statute which should direct and govern the gradual creation of an Australian nation in arms, the Act had blemishes which even its best friends could not fail to admit. What was wanting was the grip of an experienced and practical military mind which would preserve and foster what was good in the system, but at the same time seek to alter, so far as was possible, the most glaring of the defects. It is this service that Lord Kitchener's master mind has rendered to the Commonwealth, and it must now be shown with what insight, sagacity, and breadth of view this great soldier carried out the task confided to him by the people of Australia.

II

In the Memorandum which he handed in before he left Australia, Lord Kitchener did not mince matters with his hosts. He expressed his thanks for the facilities afforded him, and paid a graceful tribute to the fine material and the keenness of the manhood of Australia. But he added that the existing forces were "inadequate in numbers, training, organization, and munitions of war to defend Australia from the dangers that are due to the present conditions which prevail in the country, as well as to its isolated position."

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

"It is an axiom held by the British Government," wrote Lord Kitchener, "that the Empire's existence depends primarily upon the maintenance of adequate and efficient naval forces. As long as this condition is fulfilled, and as long as British superiority at sea is assured, then it is an accepted principle that no British Dominion can be successfully and permanently conquered by an organized invasion from Oversea." But in applying this principle to Australasia Lord Kitchener remarks that considerations of time and space cannot be disregarded. He shows that concentration of force in one or other theatre may be compulsory for the Navy, that in other seas British naval forces may remain for a time inferior to those of an enemy, and that some time may elapse before the command of these seas will be assured. He considers, therefore, that it is the duty of all self-governing Dominions to provide a military force adequate to deal promptly with an attempt at invasion, and thus to ensure local safety and public confidence until the command at sea has been decisively and comprehensively asserted.

Lord Kitchener next alludes to the ocean distances which separate Australia from possible enemies, the armed strength and ocean transport of these people, and, finally, the small population, vast area, and railway communications of Australia. These considerations lead him to estimate the land forces required at 80,000 fighting troops, of whom half

are required to defend the larger cities and fortified ports from attack, while the other half would be free to operate as a mobile force. But these conclusions do not lead him to advise the creation of two different classes of troops. The best defence is the attack, and Lord Kitchener recommends that there should be no difference in the enrolment, organization, and equipment of any unit.

ORGANIZATION

There are at present in Australia two Infantry Brigades, five Light Horse Brigades, and four Mixed Brigades, besides Garrison and unallotted troops. Lord Kitchener thinks that the forces should consist of twenty-one Infantry Brigades, each of four battalions, twenty-eight regiments of Light Horse, forty-nine four-gun Field, and seven four-gun Heavy and Howitzer Batteries, seven communication companies, and fourteen field companies of Engineers. This is the equivalent of seven Infantry Divisions with accessories, but there is no allusion to divisional organization in the Memorandum. The establishments suggested are, for a battalion, 750 "rank and file" in peace and 1001 in war; for Light Horse 350-470; and for a battery 130-146. The expression "rank and file" is apparently used in error, for if we compare paragraphs 73 and 75 of the Memorandum we see that warrant and non-commissioned officers are included in the total. These peace establishments should, in Lord Kitchener's opinion, be found by the 80,000 trained soldiers, and the augmentation to war establishment by the addition of recruits and 25-26-year men.

TRAINING

Though taking the Defence Act as the basis of his proposals, Lord Kitchener departs from the training periods therein prescribed. He accepts cadet training as a valuable preparation, but cannot admit that it can replace recruit training. Consequently he classes the 18-19-year men as recruits, and, while desiring that they should be liable to

join the ranks in war, he does not include them in his proposed peace establishment of 80,000 men. He further says that soldiers must be exercised in camp annually, and that considering the natural aptitude of the Australian, favoured by the conditions of his civil life, the training should consist of six clear days annually, and that this will meet requirements up to the 25th year if fully utilized under thoroughly competent officers. For the 25-26-year men he considers that a muster parade will suffice. The general effect of his proposals is to maintain the periods of training fixed by the Defence Act, except for men aged twenty to twenty-five who escaped all training under that statute. It must be remembered that after the age of twenty-six Australians will be available, for what they are worth, as reserves for the period mentioned in Clause 60 of the Act; that is to say, up to sixty years of age, with liability to be called upon by classes, beginning with unmarried men under thirty-five.

QUOTAS AND ENROLMENT

As worked out by Lord Kitchener, these proposals entail an annual contingent of 17,075 youths aged eighteen to nineteen, of whom 12,500 are for Infantry, 1950 for Light Horse, and 1450 for Artillery. Allowing, as Lord Kitchener does, for an annual wastage of 5 per cent, this would give the necessary 80,000 men, aged nineteen to twenty-five, in seven years, when the Infantry would number 63,000 men and the other arms in proportion. It may be mentioned, however, that these 80,000 men include neither the 17,075 men of eighteen to nineteen, nor the 6000 Engineers and departmental troops, nor the 12,450 men aged twenty-five to twenty-six. Including these, the total number is over 115,000 men.

A WARNING

Lord Kitchener lays stress on the imperative need that the country should take pride in its defenders; he insists that the organization should be real and designed for war

purposes only, and that the means for educating, training, and equipping officers and men should be provided. Unless these requirements be met, he says, no military system can be devised which will be other than an illusion and a source of waste of public funds. He declares that the citizen force must be an integral portion of the national life ; that the citizen must be brought up to look forward to the day when he will be enrolled as fit to defend his country ; and that he should be "accustomed to practise those habits of self-denial, of devotion to and emulation in the execution of his duty, of reticence, and of prompt obedience to lawful authority, which are essential to the formation of patriotic and efficient citizen soldiers." He adds that "these considerations show how completely a citizen force should be kept outside party politics. Political feeling in an Army is always a serious drawback to efficiency, and may become a danger to the State."

THE AREAS

After suggesting that those who are the sole or main support of their families should be exempted from serving, and that men who are the fittest of their year should be taken for the quotas, Lord Kitchener goes on to suggest the division of Australia into areas, each to provide a definite proportion of a fighting unit and to be in charge of a thoroughly trained permanent instructional officer, assisted by one or two non-commissioned officers. Ten areas, he suggests, should form one group under a superior instructional officer, who would become the brigade-major in time of war. Taking the Infantry battalion as the standard to govern calculations, Lord Kitchener divides Australia, as an example of what might be done, into 215 areas, and thinks that two areas in the cities and three in the country should be allowed per battalion of Infantry, with a due proportion of other arms.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL OFFICER

The permanent instructional officer in charge of an area, according to Lord Kitchener's plan, should inspect the

junior and train the senior cadets. It should be part of his duties to enrol, equip, and train the recruits and trained soldiers ; to supervise registration and keep up lists of trained men ; to communicate to other areas all changes of residence ; and to have a thorough acquaintance with the inhabitants of his area. The area officer, according to this plan, becomes the mainspring of the Citizen Forces. He will be assisted by the officers of the forces within his area, but upon his efforts, and upon the amount and quality of the home training which he can arrange, the success of the Citizen Forces will mainly depend.

Lord Kitchener thinks it is evident that the area officer must be carefully selected and thoroughly trained, and that the selection and education of suitable men will be the foundation of all subsequent efficiency. These men, he says, must be taken young, and be given a complete military education calculated to make them good leaders, strict disciplinarians, and thoroughly competent officers, who will realize that their career depends upon their ability to do their duty, and that alone. He suggests that West Point should be taken as a model, so far as its ideals are concerned, and he feels sure that there will in future be ample posts to be filled by the graduates of a Military College.

AN AUSTRALIAN STAFF CORPS

These considerations lead Lord Kitchener to recommend the formation of a Staff Corps which will hereafter provide officers for area, district, and head-quarters staffs, as well as officers of the permanent troops. This Staff Corps should, in Lord Kitchener's opinion, be entirely drawn from the Military College, and its members should be sent abroad to study, and should be attached to other land forces of the Empire. He suggests that 350 officers from the rank of lieutenant to that of colonel will be required. To attract the right stamp he advises that the pay must be good, and, with some sad experience of non-effective votes, he recommends that a deduction should be made from the pay of each rank to assure adequate provision on retirement. The rates

of pay which he suggests are £250 to £350 for subalterns, rising to £800 and £900 for colonels.

III

LEADERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE

Lord Kitchener warns Australia that "any political interference with the management of the Military College, in which disciplinary training forms an important part, and the efficiency of which is so essential to the defence of Australia, should be strictly avoided." He then goes on to discuss the citizen officer; advises that he should be chosen young from the best material available, and recommends that instruction should be within his reach at or near his home, and that he should serve more continuously and for longer periods than his men in order to repay the nation for the trust confided in him. Lord Kitchener expresses his agreement with the principle laid down in the Defence Act, that in Citizen Forces all promotion should be from the ranks, but advises that service in the ranks of the senior cadets should count. He suggests that area officers should nominate suitable senior cadets as sub-lieutenants, and that these should serve on probation as lieutenants during the first year of their adult training in the Citizen Forces, and should be granted commissions if willing to serve for twelve years and approved by the battalion commander. The rates of pay recommended for the citizen officers during the training period run from £1 a day for subalterns to £3 a day for colonels.

The rates of pay recommended for sergeants by Lord Kitchener are eight shillings a day during camps, and for citizen soldiers four shillings a day. It is suggested that the selection and training of the non-commissioned officers are primarily the duty of the citizen officer, but Lord Kitchener does not enter at all into the question of schools for non-commissioned officers. As for the men, he thinks that much will depend upon the amount of training that the citizen soldier performs at or near his home.

STRENGTHS AND WAR ESTABLISHMENTS

Lord Kitchener makes up his Infantry battalion to war establishments by adding 143 recruits and 108 25-26-year men to the 750 non-commissioned officers and men of the peace establishments. This gives him the requisite 1001 non-commissioned officers and men. He has already suggested 84 battalions. According to his table in paragraph 15, he will have just 84,700 Infantry available, including recruits and 25-26-year men. He will require 84,084 to make up his 84 battalions. There is no margin, or allowance for sick and absentees, so that if the number 1001 is really required, and still more if this number is to be maintained in the field, either the Infantry annual quotas should be raised or Australia must be prepared to draw upon classes above the age of 26. The same remark applies to the Light Horse regiments, which have an estimated strength of 13,160 to supply war establishments of 13,150, and on the whole it would have been better if Lord Kitchener had not cut the yearly quotas to be enrolled quite so fine.

Lord Kitchener advises that the military districts with their commandants and staffs should continue. He accepts the Military Board as he finds it, but considers that its work requires careful allotment, and urges that its military members should give their opinions on strictly military grounds and avoid all political influences. He also recommends that the appointment of Inspector-General should be continued.

Lord Kitchener estimates that the cost of his proposals in the seventh year of their application will amount to £1,884,000. This is not much more than the £1,742,000 which the Deakin-Cook scheme is calculated to cost by the year 1914-15. The main items of Lord Kitchener's Budget are £547,000 for pay, allowances, and camp training of the Citizen Forces ; £234,000 for permanent services ; £161,000 for Cadet training, including stores ; £150,000 for new works and buildings ; £142,000 for the Staff Corps ; and £136,000 for ammunition.

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

Lord Kitchener truly says that much may be done to make or mar his proposed system during a period of transition. He desires, therefore, that the working out of the details should be entrusted to one or more officers who thoroughly understand the scope and the spirit of the system which he has proposed. He thinks that all schemes should be tested by their utility, or the reverse, to the full-grown Citizen Force. He does not consider that any of the officers now serving should be transferred to the Staff Corps, but he recommends that the posts of area officers should be temporarily filled by the best Militia and Volunteer officers. The expediency of these proposals is open to doubt, for the success of the scheme must depend for many years to come upon the efforts of these Militia and Volunteer officers, and unless these officers serve under the same conditions as the young officers coming from the Military College, jealousies and friction are inevitable. Lord Kitchener nowhere plainly states that the Militia should disappear, but the 56s. a week of the Defence Act does not figure in his Budget. . . . He declares that the process of merging the existing units into the National Citizen Force will be gradual, and he advises that the designations and associations of existing regiments should be continued under the new system, in which each regiment should have a territorial title and a number. As for the non-commissioned officers, of whom 400 will eventually be required, Lord Kitchener suggests that the existing 229 should be distributed throughout the areas, and that they should be supplemented by the most suitable appointments that can be made.

COMMENTS

No one can read this admirable Memorandum without being immensely impressed by the clearness of vision, the foresight, and the grip of Australian military affairs which appear in nearly every line. It is not the least interesting of the results of Lord Kitchener's mission to Australia that

we are enabled for the first time to ascertain his views on the subject of the Citizen Forces of a modern British community, and to see how far his military conscience enables him to conciliate the interests of the individual with those of the State. One must suppose that his opinions have been long pondered, and they deserve the close attention, not only of other Dominions overseas, but of England besides.

The foundation of Lord Kitchener's plan is the Staff Corps to be formed exclusively of carefully selected men, who acquire a thorough professional education by a three-year course at a Military College, where the formation of character, of leadership, and of habits of discipline, is more insisted upon than scientific lore. It is from this college that Lord Kitchener hopes to draw his future area officers, with whom will rest the gradual extension of the military spirit in its best sense among the people of Australia.

His plan of organization simplifies and clarifies the ideas of the Defence Act. The Australian National Army, under his plan, will be one and indivisible, all trained on the same lines, all subject to the same conditions and liabilities, all paid at the same rates, and all available for offensive war. If, in appearance, his 80,000 men compare unfavourably with the 206,000 of the Defence Act, it must be remembered that, of these 206,000, there are 80,000 without any liability to train annually, and 60,000 Rifle Clubmen who may have, musketry aside, no training at all. Lord Kitchener's 80,000, but actually 115,000 men, all of whom will be trained annually from the age of eighteen to twenty-five, and will have in their bones the drill and discipline of their Cadet training, represent a far superior force, while it remains open for Australia, as her population and resources expand, to increase her numbers by raising the quotas or by prolonging the period of liability to training beyond the age of twenty-five.

A NATIONAL SYSTEM

The Australian Army, if this plan is carried out, will be an Army on which the Empire can count for the services

which are likely to be demanded of it. It will fit in deftly with the brigades and divisions of the British and Indian schemes, and it will be capable of expansion at any time by an increase of the annual quotas. The division of Australia into areas for the purposes of organization reproduces the ideas which lie at the root of our Territorial Force system at home, and is the only reasonable plan upon which a National Army can be based. Finally, the cost of the plan is moderate, and represents for Australia, adding Naval and Military expenditure together, not much more than one-third of the cost per head of similar expenditure at home.

The curse of most military forces in British Dominions oversea, has hitherto been the meddling of politicians in strictly military affairs, and the dabbling in politics of soldiers. With this canker of armies, Lord Kitchener makes no pact nor truce, and wherever his words are read they will be understood. His Memorandum sounds the knell of a pernicious practice which must be abandoned by nations which aspire to be great. In place of this chaos, Lord Kitchener desires to endow Australia with a Staff Corps chosen from the best of her people, thoroughly educated in their profession, and enabled, thanks to generous conditions of pay, to devote themselves wholly and exclusively to their military duties.

Mr. Deakin's many friends and admirers will see, with much concern, that he is no longer in a position to take advantage of Lord Kitchener's advice. But the Labour Party now in power includes many patriotic and practical men of affairs who are capable of amending the Defence Act in the sense of Lord Kitchener's recommendations.

We must hope fervently that Australia, before whose patriotism we must bow with shame, will add once more to the debt of gratitude that we owe to her fine example, and will rise to the height of the ideals set so clearly before her by our great commander.

CHAPTER V

THE DIVISION AT WAR STRENGTH*

No soldiers had been privileged to see a British Infantry division of the modern pattern at war strength until Major-General Grierson's 1st Division paraded in the Long Valley on July 28.

No one knew exactly what a division at war strength looked like ; how easy or how difficult it would be to assemble, march, and manœuvre such a force ; whether all the different parts bore the proper relation to the whole ; and whether the whole was cumbrous or the reverse. As, again, we had already committed ourselves to the new organization, not only for the First Line, but also for the Second, it was a somewhat anxious moment when the 1st Division assembled to teach us whether we had taken a right course or a wrong.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

These doubts were soon set at rest. The division presented a wonderful spectacle and a truly formidable appearance. The mass of infantry was extremely impressive, not to say forbidding. The artillery formations covered more ground than all the rest of the division together, but at the same time conveyed a sense of power which could not be mistaken. Neither the brigade nor the divisional ammunition columns, whether at the point of assembly or on the march, proved to be so unwieldy as many feared would be the case, while the transport and supply column and the field ambulances seemed sufficiently handy and mobile. It is true that neither

* From *The Times*, August 7, 1909.

the divisional ammunition column nor the supply column accompanied the division on the march to Frensham, and it is also true that the supply park did not figure at the parade. But quite enough was seen to show that our modern division is not only well balanced and complete in all its parts, but also sufficiently mobile and flexible, if directed, as the 1st Division notoriously is, by a skilful commander and a well-trained Staff. There are some observations to be made concerning various arms and services in detail, but, taking everything together, most soldiers present were very well satisfied, and all agreed that the experiment was worth the price, and that it was admirably conducted by the Aldershot Command.

THE DIVISIONAL CAVALRY

Taking the arms in their order on parade, we begin with the divisional cavalry, which was formed by two squadrons of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, which proved most useful for reconnoitring purposes on July 29, but represented an arm which does not figure in the mobilized division. Everybody knows that our divisional "cavalry" now consists of mounted infantry, and that this indispensable organ of the divisional command is seldom available to work with the other arms as part and parcel of the division. We seem to entertain a rooted objection to come to a sensible decision on the subject of our divisional "cavalry." Our present idea is to find this force on mobilization from the Army Reserve, and the 1st Division, for example, will invariably have attached to it in war mounted infantry reservists from the Highland district, even though there may not be a single Highland battalion in the division. The same rule applies to other divisions; and thus all must confide their protective duties to mounted infantry companies which know nothing of the division to which they belong, while this division knows nothing of them, and the mounted infantry commander does not know his men. That this system has some administrative convenience may be conceded, but the tactical disadvantages are serious. The duties

are so important, and the force allotted to them so small, that we cannot rest satisfied with the present arrangement. The principle should be accepted that the divisional "cavalry" must exist not only in war but also in peace, that it must share in the divisional training, and that it must have a continuous existence as part of the divisional unit.

THE DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY

The 22nd, 24th, and 29th Field Artillery Brigades, with their attendant brigade ammunition columns, presented a very serviceable appearance. Our field artillery are gradually becoming masters of the new gun and are improving every year in their practice, although there are still a few defects in the technical equipment which remain to be remedied. The 12th Howitzer Brigade only consisted of two batteries, but the third will soon be added. This brigade was very smart and workmanlike, and it is only to be regretted that this is the fourth year in succession in which the writer has had to note and deplore the absence of a good modern howitzer. The heavy battery looked well, but it is high time that we abandoned the extravagant system of hiring the horses for it.

The brigade ammunition columns, each with their sixty-four vehicles and 378 draught horses, will probably replace their General Service wagons by mechanical transport sooner or later, thus saving the incubus of thirty-eight wagons and 220 horses. It is also questionable whether we should not do better to take our reserve small-arm ammunition from the artillery brigade ammunition columns, and form infantry brigade ammunition columns as separate units. The supply of ammunition to infantry in action would be facilitated by this change, and the artillery ammunition column would be rendered smaller and more mobile. It would also be a good thing to appoint a commander for the combined artillery brigade ammunition columns of each division. At present these columns are formed by, and nominally remain part of, their affiliated artillery brigades, but they do not necessarily follow them

on the march, and are liable to be drawn upon by any troops in need of ammunition. It would be better that they should be commanded, like the divisional ammunition column, by one head.

As to the divisional ammunition column, most people agree that this should be mainly, if not exclusively, composed of mechanical transport. About half the horses hired on July 28 were turned over to this column, and a somewhat sorry lot they were. It was creditable, in the circumstances, that the column made such a good show. About ten per cent of the hired horses refused to work, and many of the collars and traces, which came with the teams, gave way under the unaccustomed strain. But as the proper harness for the column exists in store, and better horses would, let us hope, be provided in war, it is not necessary to say more on this subject than to note the fact, for the benefit of the Territorial Force, that confidence placed in hired horses and harness on mobilization may be very much misplaced. One other point concerning the artillery. A distinctive flag is laid down for ammunition columns, but neither on this occasion, nor at the time of a previous experiment last year, did the writer observe that the flag was carried. The flag should be yellow and not blue. Blue cannot be seen at a distance, whereas yellow can be picked up at once, as every racing man knows ; and when gallopers are searching the country for ammunition this becomes an important consideration.

THE DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS

The chief criticism of the engineers is that there are too few of them—under 440 all ranks in the two field companies, while the combined bridging plant is inadequate to span a 50 ft. stream. We should add a third field company to our divisions, enabling us to attach one to each infantry brigade in case of need, and we should carry bridging plant to allow each division to span at least a stream 100 ft. wide. We cannot have too many engineers when they are allotted to offensive duties, but we are always short of them in war,

and we tend to forget them in peace, notably in our Territorial Mounted Brigades, which have no field troop, and are consequently liable to be pounded at the first broken bridge.

A service, more or less connected with the engineers and in constant use during the last few seasons at Aldershot, is the communications company. As this is not a regulation service, it did not figure in the parade, but before the columns marched, it was hastily resuscitated and performed its usual excellent work. It is quite time that this system were either recognized or abolished, for no force can change with advantage its system of communication when war begins. The writer has more than once remarked upon the admirable system of communication in the field adopted by the Aldershot Command during Sir John French's *régime*. Some people think that this system tends to make brigadiers too big for their boots, and tempts them to direct their commands from the rear. Every good thing is, of course, liable to abuse. If a brigadier is not well to the front, in each changing phase of a situation, to order his troops and to give the proper impulse and direction to an advance, he is certainly in his wrong place ; but if he is in his wrong place, all the less is his excuse if he has around him a good system of communications.

THE INFANTRY

Foreign pundits positively exhaust themselves in discussions whether three or four battalions are best for the regiment—the brigade of our organization—and whether three or four infantry brigades are best for the division. So long as our Regular battalions are limited to their present number this wrangle does not much concern us. Our six divisions each of three brigades, each of four battalions each 1000 strong, is quite as good as anything else that we could invent by chopping and changing. Moreover, we might, in case of need, copy the Japanese, and add a Special Reserve infantry brigade to each division in war. This would, of course, horrify generals who think that nothing can be done

in war unless an establishment has been laid down in peace ; but with our twenty-seven extra Reserve battalions the addition would be practicable, were we to increase the strength of those units and to prepare them for an active *rôle*.

Another, and a permanent alteration, might be the addition of a divisional battalion to each of our six divisions. We have exactly six battalions at home over and above the divisional organization, and they would be much better permanently attached to divisions than in any other *rôle*. One requires to have been a brigade major, or on a divisional staff in war, to appreciate the advantages of a divisional battalion. Hardly a day passes but infantry has to be detailed for some duty which leaves one or other brigade short of a battalion ; and, if the day happens to be a day of battle, the symmetry of the division is upset, and one brigade is shorn of a quarter of its strength. It is different, they say, in Japan ; but in our imperfect Western world undying enmities are aroused by depriving a general of a battalion, even for a day. When one has to tell a brigadier that one of his battalions has to be detached, one feels lucky to escape with one's life. The création of a divisional battalion enables a divisional commander to meet all the claims made upon him in nine days out of ten, and to retain his brigades intact for fighting. It is to the rifle battalions of the Army that the *rôle* of divisional battalion reverts almost as a right, and there are normally six of these at home.

There is one feature of a mobilization which assumed some prominence at Aldershot. We all knew vaguely that bandsmen had to join the ranks in war, but nobody seems to have quite appreciated the effect of this step on service. The great difficulty in a hard march is to get the last ten miles out of the men. It is discipline, of course, that does it ; but by how much is not the task facilitated when the band strikes up some well-known air ? In camp and bivouac at a distance from the enemy the band adds to the gaiety, and consequently to the content, of the men, and when they

are killed it gives them a first-class funeral, a point upon which their comrades are very particular. There is no reason why we should not keep our full bandsmen, with their instruments, on service, and tell them off as stretcher-bearers, without losing a rifle at the front.

THE DIVISION ON THE MARCH

Do we march better than our forbears in Peninsular days ? Probably we do ; because, even if the nation is softer, our soldiers are drawn from a better class, the training is harder, and the discipline more strict. But our columns on the line of march are not all they should be, because it is not our custom to pay much attention to our transport and trains, which consequently lack supervision, and are rarely up to the best foreign standard. The British soldier, marching with baggage, will always disencumber himself of his rifle, if he can find any excuse for doing so, and he will climb on to any wagon and fall asleep upon it if he is allowed. If a general does not inspect his transport on the march once a day during peace training and make a few examples, his columns will grow slack. Even during the march to Frensham on July 29, the writer observed several irregularities. With our narrow, winding roads and steep gradients the most severe discipline must be preserved in the rearward services if supplies and ammunition are to reach the troops at the proper time, especially now that the introduction of quick-firing guns has so intolerably lengthened our columns of march.

In long columns of all arms it does not pay for mounted troops to trot in order to regain lost distances. In such columns trotting means a fresh check and unnecessary strain on teams, while the infantry in rear becomes tempted to increase its rate of marching and so fatigue itself unnecessarily. The artillery offended in this respect on the march to Frensham, and one battery proceeded to alter the position of its wagons on the line of march while the column was in movement. If the hourly halts had been strictly observed—that is to say, if watches had been compared

and the head of every unit had halted at the half-hours as ordered—it would have been a great advantage. Some authorities thought that this was done, but it was not the writer's experience. The march was well done, but it was not perfect; and it was not perfect because the British Army has not yet given that attention to the march discipline of long columns that the importance of the subject deserves. The infantry units are admirable, and it is the mounted troops and trains whose march discipline is imperfect. We shall pay heavily for any defects in this respect when our teams consist, not of trained horses, but of animals swept up during a general mobilization.

The main column was preceded on July 29 by an advanced guard which started late, possibly not by the fault of its commander, and allowed the main body to run into it at the first halt. But it is the duty of an advanced guard to regulate its distance from the main body, and this duty was not carried out until the divisional commander intervened. Subsequently, the advanced guard allowed itself to be checked by a few scouts, and checked the main body. When one has a whole division at one's back, one must play a strong hand and adopt hurricane tactics with the enemy's advanced parties, who will not forget one good lesson. But if one allows a few scouts to hold up such a column and to delay it, the enemy will play this game every half-hour, and will delay a march interminably.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

All these criticisms concern points of detail and do not much affect the general conclusion, which is that the Aldershot Command carried out in a thoroughly practical manner the experiment desired by the General Staff, and that this experiment showed that our modern division at war strength is a good and efficient unit of a marching and a fighting Army designed for the purposes of European warfare.

CHAPTER VI

HORSES AND MOBILIZATION *

“What victory means at the opening of a war I need not explain, for every page of military history makes it clear.”—*General von Einem, in the Reichstag.*

FOR several years past the writer has pointed out that, until we are pleased to make proper arrangements for the census of horses during peace and for their impressment in time of war, the timely mobilization of our land forces cannot be guaranteed.

IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION

The average citizen who is not in touch with military affairs may not very easily understand why it is that the Army lays such stress upon a horse and vehicle census and upon a proper system for impressing these indispensable adjuncts of an Army on mobilization. The reason is that, for motives of economy, only a nucleus of horses is kept up by an army in peace, and, for a Second Line at all events, only a small proportion of the vehicles which will be required in the field. This economy cannot be justified unless a practicable plan exists for the rapid and orderly impressment of all the animals and vehicles required on mobilization. The sword of modern war has a keen edge and flies swiftly from its scabbard. Every Foreign Power, whether Cæsarian or Republican, has consequently regulated its horse census and requisition system with scrupulous care, so that the wants of the Army may be promptly met, and so that the civil business of the population may be as little interfered with as the nature of the case admits. Failure to organize

* From *The Times* of February 18, 1910.

such a system exposes a nation to disaster, owing to the rapid mobilization of modern armies, while a disorderly system of requisition imposes upon a population unnecessary hardships and dislocates its trade. Is it wonderful, then, since we in Britain have no system at all, that there is crying need for reform ?

TWO ASPECTS OF THE HORSE QUESTION

We must discriminate, to begin with, between two different aspects of this horse question. Broadly speaking, horse-breeding and everything connected with its encouragement concern the civil population first and foremost. The utilization of equine and vehicular resources on mobilization, on the other hand, concerns soldiers and the War Office. No doubt the improvement of breeds of horses suitable for military purposes concerns the Army very nearly, and a good modern Remount Branch should always have funds at its disposal for encouraging such breeds. But our Army, on the whole, makes such slight demands upon the country for horses in normal times that it cannot pretend to exercise a very serious influence upon supply. We have only some 21,000 horses on our peace establishment at home, and the renewal of one-tenth each year does not mean much. For France and Germany, with 100,000 to 120,000 horses on their peace establishments, it is a different matter, since they have each to find some 12,000 or more remounts a year. Our Army, however, quite as much as the great armies of Europe, has the duty of becoming mobile in war, and therefore must have, on mobilization, a predominating voice in the selection of animals suitable for its needs.

FOREIGN SYSTEMS

The writer's belief is that the greater number of our military mistakes in days gone by have been due to want of study of foreign systems on the part of men responsible for the higher administration of our Army. Foreign armies watch one another closely, and copy each other's strong

points. We, in our presumption, go on tinkering with our insular contrivances, just as Cassivelaunus and his War Office did when Cæsar was on the wing, regardless of the march of progress abroad. Our officers who travel abroad report year after year that such and such improvement has been made in one Army or another, but rarely indeed does any action follow upon their reports. The men at the top do not know foreign systems intimately, or at least have not done so until a very recent date. Yet, unless an officer knows all the chief foreign systems well, and one at least intimately and in detail, he is not competent to inspire reforms at home, because his education is unfinished.

A HORSE CENSUS

The recent Circular Memorandum No. 231 shows what we lose when cheerful amateurs begin to evolve reforms from their inner consciousness. Every single foreign Power entrusts to its regular civil administration the duty of establishing, in the first instance, lists of horses and vehicles available for military purposes, and it directs by statute the activities of all this administration. When mobilization is ordered it is the civil administration again which warns owners of horses and vehicles where and when they should present their belongings for inspection. The cantonal and communal authorities in Switzerland; the provincial, district, and parish officers in Russia; the *Regierungs-Bezirk* and the *Kreis* with the *Landrath* at its head in Prussia; the *Prefetto*, *Sotto-Prefetto*, and the *Circondari* in Italy; and, finally, the mayors of the municipal councils of French communes, one and all have a prominent position and heavy responsibility in arranging the census and in producing the animals and vehicles required in war. Of all the errors of principle which vitiate the amiable intentions of the War Office Memorandum, none is more striking than the adumbration of an idea that the services of the law and of the existing local government can be dispensed with. We have an efficient and a widely extended system of local government, and its duty should be to carry out the functions

which devolve upon local government abroad in all this matter. When we have such a highly organized system in being it is not very wise, for the purpose of a census and impressment, to substitute for it a scrambling and amateur system which will assuredly prove as inefficient as expensive.

Let us see, if we are not too proud or too old to learn, how the system works abroad, and take France for an example. Early in December every year the mayor of each commune publishes and placards notices to all proprietors, ordering them to make a declaration before the following January 1 of all horses and mules in their possession, and to give a full description of each animal. This declaration is obligatory, and non-observance is met by a fine, as also is any negligence on the part of a mayor. Between the 1st and 15th of every January the mayor makes out, from these declarations, his census lists, which give the names and addresses of all owners of horses, and between January 16 and 20 he and the *gardes champêtres* and police agents assure themselves by inspection that the returns have been correctly made. In France, as in other countries, there are certain exceptions. Horses and mares under five years old, mules under three year old, horses not up to standards, and all those belonging to diplomatic agents of Foreign Powers, are excluded from the census lists of Continental European States. The mayor gives to every owner making a declaration a certificate, which, if the owner has more than one residence, can be shown to mayors of other communes in which the horse is not inscribed. The mayor's returns are made out in duplicate and sent to the *Sous-Préfet* by January 20. This latter official keeps one copy and sends the other to the recruiting commandant of the district, who makes out a numerical roll and sends it by January 25 to the Army Corps commander.

The mayors, again, complete every three years a census of vehicles, acting in this matter after notice from the *Préfet*, who is advised by the Minister of War. Every conveyance is shown on this return, unless it is exclusively reserved for carrying persons, but special stress is laid upon vehicles

which can be horsed by their owners, and practically no others are taken. If an owner has more than one vehicle, the number of vehicles shown under his name depends upon how many he can horse. This census implies no restriction upon the owner with regard to the disposal of any vehicles or harness of which he may be possessed.

It should be obvious to everyone that the system described is superior to the War Office proposal. Once admit, as we in our laws have always admitted, the principle of expropriation for the public benefit, it follows that the interests of the public must be guarded as closely as possible. It is the law, the civil authority, and the local government which are naturally best suited to carry out this duty, and every single Power in Europe except England has recognized the fact and acted upon it.

CLASSIFICATION

For military purposes, a census without a classification is almost entirely useless. When we have the totals of the Police census, we shall probably be surprised and think that there is no more need to trouble our heads about want of horses. But there are horses and horses. For instance, when a classification of horses took place in Russia in 1888, in pursuance of the instructions of February 8-20 of that year, there were 19,674,723 horses examined, and it seemed certain that there would be an abundance for all purposes. But the classification showed that there were only 180,173 saddle-horses of 14·2 hands and over among all these millions. Similarly in Switzerland, though there are over 100,000 horses in the country, there are not much more than 10,000 available for the saddle, and this is so well recognized that all saddle-horses which escape the initial requisition are at once despatched to the depots of the four Army Corps. We must never forget, besides, that all those foreign sources of supply which were open to us in our last war may be closed upon another occasion, and that it will then be a case of living upon our own fat.

The next point of notice is that, in principle, a classifica-

tion should take place every year, and should be conducted as rapidly as possible, so that the results may be utilized at once. It is almost the only defect of the French system that the War Minister is not obliged to order an annual classification. The French military authorities have striven hard to substitute "must" for "may," but the politicians have been obdurate, and upon the heads of the Deputies there rests a grave responsibility. When discretionary powers are reserved in matters of this kind, we all know what happens at the first turn of the finance screw in a Cabinet. If a classification is not conducted annually its usefulness is greatly impaired. French experience shows that every year one-third of the horses of the previous year's classification disappears. It is probable that our horse population is even more nomadic in its habits than that of France, for in the winter our hunting-stables are full and in the summer almost empty, while there is a considerable movement of horses other than hunters from time to time. These difficulties could, however, in some measure be overcome if owners were compelled to report any alterations arising between two classifications.

In France inspection and classification take place in each commune in the presence of the mayor, and at a place appointed by the military authority. The Commission assembled for the purpose of classification consists of an officer—who acts as president, and has a preponderating vote in case of a division of opinion—a civil member, and a veterinary officer or civil surgeon. To each Commission there are attached a *sous-officier* as secretary, a couple of gendarmes, and an orderly. Horses are classed in six separate categories, corresponding with cuirassiers, dragoons, chasseurs and hussars, artillery saddle-horses, artillery draught, and heavy draught. The mules are in three categories, for pack, light and heavy draught. For each of these nine categories there is an obligatory *minimum* standard of height. The tables drawn up by the Commission are in duplicate; one copy remains at the *Mairie*, and the other goes to the recruiting commandant. The owner of a horse considered

unfit for any purposes receives a certificate to this effect. It need scarcely be pointed out that the categories of our Police Census Forms, which are to be used by Associations for purposes of classification, are hopelessly inadequate for military purposes.

Vehicles are brought before the Commission fully horsed. They are not classed unless they are fit for army service, and are drawn, according to their shape and weight, by one or more horses or mules fit for work. Vehicles belonging to the public service and the railways are not classed. The German Regulations give types of vehicles and their requisite weight and capacity; they also allow lanterns, buckets, and forage sacks to be requisitioned with the wagons. At the close of the classification in France a public ballot takes place to decide the order in which the vehicles classed shall be called out in each commune in case of mobilization, and the results of this ballot are duly registered in the usual duplicate returns. Nothing could be more fair, and, whereas with us impressment would raise a howl of execration, and might deserve it, there would not be a word said by French owners. It is clear to them that scrupulous attention has been paid to the claims of justice and good order.

IMPRESSMENT

The following are exempted from requisition in France : Horses belonging to the President of the Republic ; horses and vehicles belonging to certain designated public services ; stallions approved for stud purposes ; mares in foal ; horses under six years old and mules under four ; horses and vehicles of the postal service and of the railway companies ; and, lastly, horses, mules, and vehicles belonging to the diplomatic agents of Foreign Powers and to strangers residing in France, if belonging to certain nations, fourteen in number, which have signed special conventions which exempt them from military requisitions. It is not one of the least defects of the War Office Memorandum that it has nothing whatever to suggest on the subject of exemptions.

The French Minister of War fixes the contingent of horses and vehicles to be supplied on mobilization by each Army Corps region, according to the resources already classified. The military authority divides this contingent in the region so as to equalize burdens, and the Minister makes good any deficit in one region by the surplus of another. Directly the order of mobilization is received, the local government enters again upon the scene. It is the mayor's duty immediately to warn owners of all horses and vehicles classed that these must be produced at the day, hour, and place fixed for each canton by the military authority. Horses must appear properly shod, and with a watering bridle, head-collar, and head-rope. The requisition Commissions are of the same composition as those for classification, but they now have added to them two civil secretaries and a number of shoeing-smiths. All owners interested, together with the mayors and their assistants, must attend at the appointed place.

The work begins with the wagons and teams. The communes draw lots to decide the order in which they shall be taken, and the teams are then chosen from each commune in succession, according to the result of the ballot at the last classification. The horses are taken next. All decisions of the Commission are without appeal. Each owner of a requisitioned horse receives a form showing owner's name, number of the horse in the classification, and the price to be paid. This price is decided by the category in which the horse stands in the classification. There is a Budget figure for each category, and the owner receives this amount, augmented by one-quarter in the case of horses taken for saddle and for artillery draught. Any horses not presented can be seized by the police. It is the business of the Army to send parties to take over the requisitioned horses and to conduct them to the troops.

In all this matter the division of the territory among districts of requisition—not to be confused with classification districts—is very important. In the delimitation of territory for the purpose of requisition, or what we call impressment or collection, account must be taken of the number of

animals and vehicles that can be requisitioned by one Commission in a day, and, secondly, of the number of days during which the Commission has to work. It is obvious that the War Office plan, which would send a lot of roving collectors round the counties and the towns to pick up what they can haphazard fashion, is about as poor a plan as can well be conceived. Foreign plans are wholly different. They compel owners to wait on the Commissions instead of *vice versa*, and consequently a far larger intake is possible for each Commission in a day. The Russians think that they can requisition 200 classified horses in a working day to each Commission, but this is probably a sanguine estimate, for the French, after the most patient investigation, count on only 150. This is already one horse every four minutes during a working day of ten hours, and it is not likely to be exceeded if the work is done properly. It must also be remembered that all the Commissions cannot be assembled and at work when the bell rings. Some nations do not count upon any intake during the first day of mobilization, and in Russia it is not probable that the Commissions will be busy before the third or fourth days of mobilization. It would be unsafe to reckon that our collectors could do much before the morning of the second day of mobilization.

VARIATIONS FROM THE NORMAL

It is occasionally the practice abroad to resort to individual requisitions on exposed frontiers, that is to say for troops to mark down in peace, and to requisition direct from owners in mobilization, the horses and vehicles required. For all troops likely to be attacked without much warning this is a system to be commended. The Italian system of *precettazione* carries these ideas rather far, and some people think that Italy will find nearly the half of the horses which she requires on mobilization by this means. Italy, some years ago, went in for our present system of registration, but instead of paying only five shillings a horse she paid nearly £2. There were 27,637 horses registered in 1889-90, at a cost of nearly £52,000, but the system was

expensive, and as soon as Italy passed her somewhat drastic Requisition Law in 1889 she dropped the registration. So can we, when we have done as much.

CONCLUSIONS

The writer has already suggested that the mobilization of the Regular Army does not come within the duties of County Associations, and that it would be very dangerous to entrust to such bodies the efficiency of our First Line. It will be time enough to reconsider this matter when an efficient system of classification and collection is set up.

If our desire is to secure the best results, the best course would be to confide the main part of the work, as is everywhere done abroad, to the existing machinery of local government. It is advisable that an annual census of all horses and vehicles should be taken by these authorities in pursuance of a law, and that there should be an annual classification, carried out by competent persons instructed by General Officers Commanding-in-Chief at home. It is further advisable that, when mobilization is ordered, the civil authorities again should control the system of requisition and should cause the classified horses and vehicles to be produced by their owners at appointed places, dates, and hours. The necessary number of requisition commissions should be nominated in peace, and the whole system of census, classification, and impressment should thus become distinguished for the order, fairness, and rapidity which, under the War Office plan, will be wholly lacking.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARMAMENT OF CAVALRY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES *

SIR,—In his new book, “War and the Arme Blanche,” Mr. Erskine Childers challenges me to make a full profession of faith on the subject of the armament of Cavalry.

He says that he has never seen this full profession, and he is right, because I have never made it since I began to write for you. I have not done so because I consider the question of the armament of Cavalry to be one which can only be determined by Cavalry officers of much experience in peace and war. I have never ventured to select the instruments with which a skilled surgeon may have proposed to conduct a delicate operation, and I think that it is against the reasonableness of things that those who are not masters of a trade should teach skilled professionals the technique of their art. In short, I do not attach any value to my opinion on this subject, and therefore I am entitled to tell Mr. Childers that, much as I admire his indefatigable powers of research, his attractive style, and his burning enthusiasm, I attach the same importance to his opinion on the armament of Cavalry that I do to my own.

But, with this reservation, he is welcome to my opinion for what it is worth, even though he forces me, to my regret, to differ in some respects from Lord Roberts, whose interesting preface to Mr. Childers’s book greatly adds to its importance. The veteran Field-Marshal, whose opinion on all matters that relate to war, and especially the handling of troops in the field, must always rivet the respect and

* From *The Times* of March 26, 1910.

attention of his grateful fellow-countrymen, covers with his great authority the conclusions of Mr. Childers, and asks, very properly, that those who differ from these conclusions should give their reasons. But I observe that the Field-Marshal and the author are not quite at one. The latter desires to abolish lance and sword, but the former, though he thinks that "close order charging is practically a thing of the past," asks that Cavalry should have a sword-bayonet with "a substantial handle, large enough to be firmly gripped, so that in the event of its being required it could be used on horseback as well as on foot." Thus Lord Roberts admits the continuing need of mounted action with the cold steel, and by this admission cuts away part of the authority on which the case of Mr. Childers must ultimately rest.

I return to Mr. Childers. He devotes 250 pages to a most interesting *résumé* of the chief Cavalry combats during the war in South Africa. He then maltreats General von Bernhardi, who is considered by most Cavalry officers to be a very eminent authority. From German theory, Mr. Childers passes on to ours, and declares that blind imitation of Continental tactics is the besetting sin of our Cavalry school. Finally, he reviews the Russo-Japanese War, and alleges that it "illustrates all conditions likely to be present in a European war," and that it "seals the doom of the *arme blanche*." Mr. Childers considers that modern Cavalry is a "hybrid" type, because it seeks to be equally proficient with the rifle and the cold steel. He is confident that this aspiration is not attainable. He regards steel-armed Cavalry as people who "pine for level swards," and mounted riflemen as soldiers who welcome inequalities of ground. He thinks that the shock theory has a deadening effect upon aggressive action with the rifle, and vouches for it that we have fashioned "in theory, and in theory only, an ideal hybrid." In short, he considers cold steel to be the enemy of progress, and, holding these views, he is perfectly logical in demanding its abolition. He is throughout a trifle contemptuous of those, no matter how experienced, who differ from him. I make no complaint on this score, but

I have to note it because this question in its last terms is one of relative authority. I hope that I have done Mr. Childers no injustice in this brief epitome of his views. I am not in search of debating points, and have no aim at all but to arrive at the right conclusions.

Before answering Mr. Childers I must make a slight digression. I think that most people expect too much of Cavalry. This arm, mainly owing to its cost, bears nowadays a very small numerical proportion to the whole in European armies. I doubt whether our Cavalry Division will ever place more than 2000 or 3000 rifles in line and a brigade more than 600. Mobility and surprise can effect much, but if we assume Cavalry to be armed with the rifle alone, we must consider how small their effectives are and how foolish it would be to destroy the eyes of the Army by using them as though they were its fists. Cavalry, like other arms, must be asked to sacrifice itself for the general good at times, but in view of its small numbers and immense value to the Army in reconnaissance, deception, and support, I think that people would do well to study, first Wellington's, and then Sir John French's handling of the arm, and not to call upon it to fulfil functions which are not its own.

I do not propose to follow Mr. Childers in all his reflections upon the war in South Africa. Many of the chief actors in that drama are happily still alive. I pray fervently that I may be excused, even in the Day of Judgment, from expressing all my opinions of that war. I do not rely upon the argument of "abnormality." War is war, and the conditions in which wars are fought vary so much that nothing is impossible. But I disagree altogether that "South African facts are the only modern facts strictly relevant to this inquiry." They are far from being so. No one can say when or where the conditions of South Africa are likely to be reproduced; and it is surely far more profitable to study the tendencies of the Cavalry to which we may in future be opposed, and to take steps to encounter this opposition with success, than to revive the smouldering embers of past controversies. Even if we admit and score

up to the credit side of Mr. Childers's account all the imperfections which he alleges in the armament, training, and performances of our Cavalry in South Africa, we are not much more advanced; for the question is not what our Cavalry was, but what it is.

The gravamen of the charge brought by Lord Roberts and Mr. Childers against our Cavalry in the war is that it was inefficient in fire action. Now, whatever may have been the case in South Africa, and whatever the causes which produced regrettable incidents, in scarcely one of which was the Cavalry discredibly concerned from first to last, it must be allowed that inefficient fire action is not a defect that can now be discovered in this arm. Mr. Childers himself admits that the Cavalry have proved themselves good target marksmen, and have made remarkable strides in fire tactics. Were he to pursue his inquiries further in regiments and brigades, he would discover that his strictures upon the Cavalry in South Africa have no present application. This is the only point in relation to South Africa that seems to matter.

Turn to Manchuria. Did the Russo-Japanese War "seal the doom of the *arme blanche*"? It did not. All great military nations were well represented on both sides during that war by skilled observers, and these people recognized that neither belligerent possessed a Cavalry up to the standards of the West. The failure of the Russian Cavalry in strategic and tactical reconnaissance is attributed to this fact by the German General Staff, and I think it is also true that Kuropatkin did not understand the use of Cavalry, and that Russian regimental officers suffered a financial loss when casualties occurred among their horses.

As for the Japanese Cavalry, it certainly performed much good service with the rifle, although it was greatly handicapped by small numbers and wretched mounts. But the real point is, not what the writer or Mr. Childers thinks were the Cavalry lessons of the war, but what deductions the Japanese drew from it. The Japanese recognized that their Cavalry was not up to the mark, and they

took prompt measures after the war to improve the breed of horses in Japan. To begin with, they increased the numbers of their Cavalry. Then a scheme was prepared to import the best foreign breeds, to establish *haras* and farms, and to raise 1,500,000 better horses within seventeen years at a cost of two million sterling. The Japanese Cavalry Manual, published in 1907, laid it down that Cavalry as a rule should act mounted, and that the rifle should only be used when there was little hope of success by mounted action alone. Could anything refute more clearly the conclusions of Mr. Childers?

To come back to the West. Our Cavalry will not be much perturbed at being called hybrids and reproved for their "mimicry" of Germany. In drafting Cavalry Training, which has its faults like the rest of us, our officers went to the best models—not German alone, but French and Austrian besides. If there are better models, Mr. Childers should name them. Some people have a crazy idea that the training of the German Cavalry is prehistoric. They hear that the German Emperor leads serried lines of steel-clad Cavalry across open plains at a gentle amble against Infantry entrenched, and they cry out in the belief that this is the German idea of war. As well might we suppose that the tactics of the British Army are displayed at the annual field-day at Aldershot, when some Pickwickian manœuvres are solemnly performed before his Majesty.

The training of the best modern Cavalry, including ours, is absolutely the reverse of that "sentimental conservatism" that Mr. Childers imagines it to be, and so far from ignoring fire efficiency it teaches it at every stage. The German trooper, for example, is taught progressively every lesson of dismounted work and every branch of the art, from picking up targets to creeping and stalking. He is taught that if he uses his firearm properly he is capable of opposing, even in the attack, any and every enemy. So far as dismounted action is concerned, the aim throughout is that expressed in paragraph 314 of the *Exerzier Reglement*—namely, to "make the cavalryman into a rifleman of

independent thought and conscientious action." Could Botha, or Delarey, or Christian de Wet ask more? If Mr. Childers agrees with this paragraph, why does he gird at us for our "mimicry" of Germany? Thanks not to the rifle alone, but to lance and rifle combined, the German Cavalry believes that it can combat detachments of all arms, and that it is so adaptable that it can take independent action in practically every eventuality of the battlefield. This is the standard to which our Cavalry is endeavouring, successfully as I believe, to attain; and it is really astonishing that people should be found to ignore all this modern movement or to suppose that Cavalry manuals are written by nincompoops for their kind.

Mr. Childers will say, no doubt, that I have not yet given him my reasons for believing in the retention of the cold steel. I am coming to that. All the best Cavalry authorities of the day hold, in common with the German and Japanese manuals, that "the mounted combat is the more usual method of Cavalry action." The chief reason for this belief is the fact that in all operations which precede the tactical encounter, and especially during the critical operations at the opening of a war, the enemy's Cavalry is the most important objective. These troops must be driven from the field, and not only driven away, but hunted to death. No reconnaissance of the enemy's masses can, as a rule, be carried out until his covering Cavalry are disposed of. The Cavalry which is successful in this encounter, or series of encounters, secures for its commander the monopoly, perhaps, of good information, without which the best-laid plans may fail. It is the mounted combat which, in the opinion of all the leading Cavalry soldiers in Europe, can best effect the object of tearing the enemy's eyes out of his head. But it is incorrect to suppose that fire effect is ignored even in the throes of this Cavalry combat. Dismounted action in connection with the mounted combat is inculcated in all armies, while horse artillery and machine guns remain in close support to pour a heavy fire into the enemy. A decision may, of course, be postponed if a weaker

or less confident Cavalry takes refuge behind cyclists and mixed detachments of other arms ; but sooner or later this Cavalry, to do any good at all, must come out to fight, and a steel-less Cavalry would then, assuming equal numbers, be snapped up quickly by another Cavalry able to act both mounted and on foot. So, at least, as the result of experience and reflection, I believe.

How much of my *Credo* have I omitted ? I believe that the intervention of Cavalry mounted on the battlefield, both by squadrons and by masses, may still, though rarely, be required to obtain some special object, such as the gain of breathing space for hard-pressed troops. I believe that the action, as at Mars-la-Tour, of a few mounted squadrons, may often have immeasurably greater consequences than the reinforcement of the firing line by an equal number of men on foot. I believe that a European Cavalry, which has no arm but the rifle, is a chicken trussed for the spit, and that it is at great disadvantage in reconnaissance and in all ground. I believe that in a country like England, where patrols will constantly stumble upon one another in villages and lanes, or at the corner of some wood, the German Cavalry, which is taught to go slap at its enemy, wherever it meets him and regardless of numbers, will destroy the *moral* of any and every opposing Cavalry not similarly instructed and not armed with the cold steel. I believe that the lance is the best weapon to supplement the rifle, because it has a longer reach, makes more people run away, and kills more men in battle than the sword, for men cut by instinct with the latter weapon and seldom use the point, preach as one may. I would arm all Cavalry with the lance. I do not believe that the lance "exposes patrols in reconnaissance" if the pennon is removed and the lance trailed with the point to the rear. I do not believe that "the lance is incompatible with effective fire action." Some of our Lancer regiments place the lance in the carbine bucket when they dismount, and on several occasions I have seen led horses brought up to the firing line at a gallop and no lances lost. I believe that "level swords" are the

very last, of all forms of ground, that the skilful Cavalry leader "pines for." I believe with Lord Roberts that the rifle should be carried on the man, because otherwise, after a charge, the ground will be covered by unarmed men. But I should be content to see rifles slung over the back, as in the German Army, when regiments are in touch with the enemy. Finally, I believe that Cavalry armed with the rifle alone would be comparatively ineffective for duties in aid of the civil power, and I should be sorry to see our Cavalry in India deprived of its cold steel.

Our Cavalry is not yet perfect, and occasionally executes a *fantasia* which may be deplored. But the doctrine is sound, the spirit excellent, and the arm efficient mounted and on foot. I am firmly convinced that the Cavalry Division will soon become that terrible instrument which it is capable of becoming in the hands of a skilled commander, who knows how to combine the use of his four weapons, cold steel, rifle, dynamite, and gun.

I am, etc.,

YOUR MILITARY CORRESPONDENT.

CHAPTER VIII

A VETERAN RESERVE*

IN what manner should County Associations proceed to organize the Veteran Reserve of the new Regulations? Should they rest content with mere registration? Should they passively conform with the mere letter of the Regulation, or should they look rather to its spirit, and endeavour to produce something of serious value to the State?

These are questions which members of County Associations are asking themselves, and much will depend upon the initial impulse given the movement. Everyone knows that the organization is needed. Our veterans, Surrey and a few regimental clubs apart, are not at present united within the boundaries of any existing society, whether civil or military. There is no opportunity for mutual help, and none for service to the State. The veteran, no matter to what category of the King's Forces he may have belonged, remains almost wholly cut off from his old comrades after leaving the Colours. From the point of view of the State there are large numbers of trained veterans whose services might be usefully employed in war, but there is no means of utilizing these services in a sensible manner. We have neither *Landwehr* nor *Landsturm*. The Army Reserve aside, our troops are all young, and because of the absence of *Landwehr* formations we shall be compelled in time of war to detach for garrisons, safeguards, and countless other secondary duties, a large part of the formations which are by their organization and training intended for a wholly different rôle. It is the most wasteful course that can be conceived, to train, equip, and organize troops for field

* From *The Times* of June 20, 1910.

service, and then to employ them for sedentary duties in war.

The writer proposes in this article to follow his usual practice of considering the best foreign model extant, and then of examining the question whether we can take this model for our guide, or, if not, how far we should depart from it. The best model in this case is given by the German *Krieger Vereine*, which now number two and a half million members, and are of great importance from the social, military, and political point of view. Unlike many other German institutions, the *Krieger Vereine* are perfectly susceptible of acclimatization in the British Isles, for they rest on a purely voluntary basis, are entirely self-supporting, and from every point of view are of great national advantage.

It must, of course, be remembered, in considering the German model and the British need, that our two countries have not exactly similar requirements. The German military organization now provides men and to spare for all imaginable contingencies of the state of war, whereas ours does not. We shall therefore find, and expect to find, that the Germans set more store on the social and less on the military aspect of veteran societies than we do. We cannot afford to change our ideas in this respect, so long as the number of troops which we possess is so terribly inadequate for the conduct of serious war, but at the same time we need not neglect the social and educational aspect of the German institution, for there is much in it worthy of great respect.

ORIGIN OF THE "VEREINE"

The idea of Veteran Societies took shape in Prussia at the close of the War of Liberation. Prussian regiments had been strengthened during the war by detachments of volunteers, who had clothed and equipped themselves at their own cost and for the greater part belonged to classes in easy circumstances. After the war these Volunteers forgathered on festive occasions, in the interest of good-fellowship and to aid their sick and suffering comrades. There was neither durable association nor central control. Later on, as the

veterans of war fell out of the ranks, membership was extended to all who had served in the Army in time of peace. Members were allowed to wear uniform, to appear in it at feasts and functions, and to possess and carry arms.

EXTENSION AFTER 1864

The return of the troops from the war with Denmark gave a great impetus to the veteran movement. The *Slesvigia* society formed in Berlin had for its main purpose the care of the veterans of the war with the Danes. The comradeship of arms was prolonged into civil life. Prussia became covered with similar institutions, which spread all over Germany, under a great variety of names, after the wars of 1866 and 1870-71. It became the common practice for the *Krieger Vereine* to muster in full force and to assure the Emperor of their fidelity whenever he appeared at some great military parade. It was not uncommon for the long lines of veterans in civil dress to equal the front of the infantry of an Army Corps. As the need for union between all the scattered societies became manifest there was a marked tendency towards combination, but this remained restricted to the different Federal States, which still retained their particularist ideas. The *Deutscher Krieger Bund*, the *Kartell-Bundniss*, and the *Bavarian Veteranen-Krieger-Kampfgenossen-Vereine* were the chief among the larger associations of the time.

As the influence and importance of the *Vereine* became more conspicuous, their objects became better defined and their statutes more precise. Their aim was to preach fidelity towards King and Country, to encourage the military spirit and love of arms among the young, and to support comrades who were sick or incapable of work. The societies held meetings and attended lectures. Every year they assembled for a solemn service in memory of the fallen. At least six members attended as a deputation at the funeral of every comrade. No distinctions were made between arms, services, and ranks, or between veterans of Army or Navy. Each candidate was proposed by a member, and

admitted to the society of his district or town after he had attended three meetings, and if no valid objections were raised. Each one of the larger provincial *Verbände* included president and members, secretary, accountant, clerk, and caretakers. The president had the right of summoning a meeting at any time, and was compelled to do so if two-thirds of the members so desired. Notices of meetings were published in the local Press. Each member paid a small annual subscription and undertook to attend one meeting a month, and to do his utmost to promote the interests of the society.

EFFORTS FOR FUSION

From time to time expression was given in the German Press to the very general desire to link up the scattered societies in some common bond. These ideas made some progress as far back as 1873, when 120 delegates met at Weissenfels and adopted statutes which had been prepared with official sanction for a *Deutscher Krieger Bund*. The publication of a journal in the interests of the *Vereine* was also approved. But, though the *Krieger Bund* was formed, and still flourishes, no real national amalgamation followed.

Nevertheless the societies continued to grow in numbers and importance. Whereas in 1875 there were only 400,000 members, these numbers a few years later had grown to a million. There were twenty-one provincial and regional *Verbände*, or groups of societies, besides two more important bodies, namely, the *Krieger Bund* of 1873 and the *Allgemeine Krieger Kameradschaft*.

The majority of the members, though no longer under an obligation to serve, were willing to do so in time of war, and were counted upon, for example, for the *Sanitäts-Kolonnen*; but it was clear that without some form of central control much energy would be wasted when things came to a point. In response to a general public demand the Emperor ordered General von Glümer to open negotiations in the year 1880 with a view to union. The General informed the societies that the Emperor would become their patron on

certain conditions. These were that the societies should inculcate and maintain fidelity toward King and Country ; that all political discussions should be avoided ; that the high officials should be nominated by the Emperor ; and, lastly, that the president should be empowered to exclude any societies which failed to conform with statutes agreed upon. These conditions are of interest because they define the Imperial point of view. The negotiations themselves failed, for the chief Federal States, Prussia apart, refused to combine.

THE KYFFHÄUSER BUND

The erection on the Kyffhäuser, near Frankenhausen, of the *Kaiser-Denkmal* by the Veteran Societies in 1896 led at last to a form of fusion. This monument was erected by the German veterans at a cost of £40,000, and gave rise to the *Kyffhäuser Bund*, which includes the whole of the provincial and larger societies and groups. Twenty-six State groups, numbering 22,972 societies with 1,940,000 members, participated in the subscription, and a managing committee was formed, composed of so many members for each Federal State. The *Kyffhäuser Bund* has its headquarters in Berlin, and controls a revenue of about £4,000 a year, derived partly from subscriptions at the annual rate of 2d. a head by members and partly from gate-money at the *Denkmal*.

The *Deutscher-Krieger-Bund* has not been much affected by the creation of this central, but not very effective, control. It includes all groups affiliated to the *Kyffhäuser Bund*, except those of Bavaria, Saxony, Würtemberg, Baden, and Hesse. It has about 17,000 societies with 1½ million members. It supports four orphanages for over 300 orphans, expends annually some £15,000 in good works, and conducts the business of mutual life assurance with a capital of over a million sterling. Among provincial groups affiliated to the *Krieger Bund* the most important is the Prussian *Landes-Kriegerverband*, which was incorporated by a Cabinet order of November 1, 1899.

THE GERMAN MODEL

It will be seen that, though particularism has to some extent prevented the German veteran societies from attaining to a completely national and homogeneous organization, they have assumed great importance, and there is a good deal to be learnt from them. They do not recruit their numbers without some discrimination, and membership cannot be obtained merely for the asking. They preserve good-fellowship and union amongst those who have served. The *Vereine* do not average much more than 100 members apiece, and it is by forming numerous small societies in country districts and in all towns that success is best secured. The veteran finds himself surrounded by his friends all his life, and receives honour from his comrades when he dies. The State, at no higher price than the leadership of its chief men, obtains the support in peace and the active aid in war of two and a half millions of trained men, all sworn supporters of existing order, and perfectly capable, in the absence of the field armies, of preserving internal security and of performing some useful military service.

THE BRITISH VETERAN RESERVE

There is absolutely no reason, as the writer has pointed out a score of times, why we should not create a similar institution, not only in these islands, but throughout the Empire. The work that is being done, or remains to be done, at one end of the military scale with Boy Scouts and Cadet Corps should be completed at the other by proper organization of our Veterans. Surrey showed us on Saturday last that with a little enterprise, a little imagination, and some good-will the work can be done. The physique of the men who mustered on the Horse Guards Parade was good. Their dress and appearance suggested respectability and fairly comfortable circumstances. Their regular performance of one or two simple movements by companies seemed to show that it would take but little time to fit them into a war organization.

Their age averaged about forty, and they were of the *Landwehr* type. Their evident delight to find themselves once more in almost military array was a pleasure to witness. The spectators felt that they were present at the birth of a new idea.

At present, it is true, the County Associations are confined to the task of registration ; there is no condition of membership except service ; the Navy is not included ; the age is limited to fifty years, except for officers and sergeants ; there is no social advantage held out to members and no promise of Royal patronage ; lastly, there is no bond of union to secure co-operation for common ends. But Mr. Haldane, in a recent speech at Guildford, explained very clearly that the initial effort was tentative and experimental, and, to judge by his speech on Saturday, no one will be better pleased than he to see a wider extension given to the idea.

Registration is obviously the first step, but veterans must not be accepted without some such safeguards as the *Vereine* impose. There should be a proper executive committee for each Association, with branches in the districts and chief towns of every county. A central club for veterans in the chief county town would prove a great attraction, and might be a fitting object for private benevolence. Membership should be open to Naval veterans, and at our chief seaports the veteran societies might well be told off to auxiliary duties connected with the Navy in war. If military service is to be given, some form of military organization must be thought out, and the best form might be that of local companies and county battalions under their own officers. We ought not, with German mistakes in our mind, to allow the societies to grow up haphazard fashion, and it is very important that the statutes of the societies should be the same for all, and that central supervision in some form, but without administrative interference, especially in finance, should be established at an early date.

It is also desirable that the privileged position of the veterans should be acknowledged on all festive and gala days ; that a place of honour should be reserved for them

at all great local and national functions ; that some Veteran uniform or distinction should be given to them ; and that Royal personages and inspecting officers should pay particular regard to the interests of the societies. A small subscription as a condition of membership would enhance rather than lower the prestige of these bodies ; and it will not be possible for them to emulate the charitable work of the German veterans until funds begin to accumulate. There is no reason why a Veteran Directorate in London should not conduct the business of life assurance as well as the *Deutscher-Krieger-Bund*, or better. The attendance of delegates at funerals of comrades would create a favourable impression. The Lord-Lieutenants would be the proper persons to appoint presidents of county societies, while the presidency of the Veteran Direction at head-quarters should be reserved for nomination by the Crown. The movement will not be thoroughly successful unless it can extend into our smaller towns and country districts in the form of small clubs affiliated to the county organizations.

It will be well to abandon at an early stage the present restrictions with regard to age. It is not sensible to tell men that they cease to be veterans at fifty. In Germany membership does not terminate till death. In veteran societies we want greybeards. We want the older men who are honoured members of society, and can do so much to add weight to council and to extend the influence of the local bodies. The best course would be to divide each society into active and sedentary portions, giving the first a military mission, and the second duties of a less exacting character. The military missions cannot be carried out effectually unless there is some central body in London in close touch with the General Staff.

The veteran societies will flourish or wither according to the amount of public spirit in each county ; but it is not too much to hope that we may eventually find for our veterans a much larger sphere of action than is dreamed of in our initial Regulations.

CHAPTER IX

LORD ROBERTS AND HIS CRITICS*

THE recent debate in the House of Lords on the subject of the exposure of these islands to invasion was, in one sense, satisfactory, and in another very much the reverse.

The debate enabled Lord Roberts and Lovat to acquaint the House of Lords, and therefore the country, with the dangers which beset the British Isles in the event of hostilities with Germany, and they were able to show, in the most conclusive manner, that the danger now continuously and complacently incurred by this country as against Germany, is far greater than was the case when Mr. Balfour spoke in 1905, and took France, for academic purposes, as the enemy. That primary truth it was necessary to drive home, and no one has any reason to complain that the foremost soldier of the day should consider it his positive duty to inform the country of the conclusions at which he has arrived after prolonged and searching inquiry.

During the long investigations which have been conducted by the Field-Marshal, and those who have acted with him in this affair, certain conclusions have emerged which are, in the writer's opinion, indisputable, and neither in the House of Lords nor elsewhere has any serious attempt been made to controvert them. The main conclusion is that, owing to the number of her troops, her facilities for railway transport, the splendid maritime installations on her coasts, and the abundance of her mercantile marine, Germany now possesses the means for sending out from her North Sea ports 150,000 men at least, completely prepared for the invasion of these islands, within thirty-six hours of the receipt of the order to act.

* From *The Times*, December 2, 1908.

An "Ancient Mariner" and an "Admiral" suggest, in letters to *The Times*, that the questions of merchant transport and of the material of war with an expedition have been ignored by the Field-Marshal. Nothing could be further from the truth. Thanks to the patriotic co-operation of Mr. Bruce Ismay, the valuable services of Mr. E. L. Fletcher, and of a number of other gentlemen belonging to the staff of the White Star Line, were placed at Lord Roberts's disposal. Other shipping firms also supplied important information, while the material of war with the expedition was considered in minute detail. As a result, the most complete and elaborate examination was made of every detail connected with transport by sea. It is not a vague and nebulous theory which the Field-Marshal has brought forward for the consideration of the Government and the country, but rather the result of inquiries by hard-headed practical men of affairs, and not one point of this interesting Staff problem has escaped exhaustive examination.

Lord Crewe took exception to the discussion of the subject in the House of Lords, and quoted the case of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne. Anyone who turns to Maxwell's *Life of Wellington*, Vol. II, p. 365, will see that the Duke desired that the state of our defences should be considered by the Government alone *in the first instance*. If Lord Roberts had brought up the matter in the House of Lords *in the first instance*, the criticism of Lord Crewe might have been deserved, but the Liberal leader in the Lords is well aware that this was not the case. The Field-Marshal has been engaged for nearly two years in his investigations, and in the first instance he submitted the results to the Government. After the inquiry before the Defence Committee was concluded, it was greatly hoped that the Prime Minister would make a statement. The Committee of Defence is the Prime Minister's Committee. Mr. Asquith presided over its recent deliberations with severe impartiality and excellent judgment. He alone was in a position to state authoritatively the conclusions at which the Cabinet had arrived, and to him alone belonged

the right and the duty of following the precedent set by Mr. Balfour in 1905. It was not till it appeared that no statement* was to be made to the House of Commons, and that the country was to be left in the dark, that Lord Roberts placed his motion on the paper in the Upper House. Lord Crewe's preliminary criticism, consequently, falls to the ground.

In a speech, which cannot be described as his happiest effort, Lord Crewe left it to be inferred that "our proper policy" should be that suggested by the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman—namely, that our land forces should always be "of such strength as would compel a foreign power to send more than 70,000 men for the purpose of invading these islands." Until the contrary is stated by the Government, we must assume that this is the conclusion to which it has come. This entitles and compels us to prepare on land to meet half the number of invaders that are shown by Lord Roberts to be capable, so far as the mechanical facilities for invasion are concerned, of being sent here at short notice. The principle is only acceptable in the same manner as half a loaf is more acceptable than no bread to a starving man. The figure of 70,000 is preferable to the 10,000 raid theory which ruled the action of the War Office, as the result of the 1905 speech by Mr. Balfour; and to that extent Lord Roberts's efforts have proved successful. Without placing any excessive faith in the virtue of a figure, we have, at all events, a fresh and a firmer basis upon which administrators of the War Office can work. That is, indubitably, a great advantage so far as it goes, but it remains unfortunately true that the Government, while acknowledging implicitly that circumstances have changed to our disadvantage since 1905, reverts to and confirms a policy suggested by the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman before these changes took place.

The writer, at all events, is thoroughly convinced that 150,000 men, at least, can be dispatched from the North Sea ports of Germany within thirty-six hours of the receipt

* Mr. Asquith eventually made his statement in 1909.

of the order to act, given such good arrangements as are foreseen, and are not considered difficult, in the Staff works published in Germany on this subject. No good reasons have yet been given to vitiate this first conclusion, and consequently Lord Roberts, and those who think with him on this point, will continue to maintain their views.

GERMAN VIEWS

There are not wanting some symptoms that the Field-Marshal has penetrated the German brain and has exposed its secrets. A German officer, described by the *Tageblatt* as "one of the first and most highly esteemed military authorities in Germany,"* has admitted that the operation sketched by Lord Roberts, though difficult, is not impossible. "It lies," he says, "within the bounds of possibility and accomplishment, and more particularly would this be so were it undertaken at a moment when England was occupied in another part of the world. Once the landing was accomplished, I believe that occupation could also be successfully carried out. Should the main force of the British Navy then reappear and cut off our retreat, Germany would dictate peace, and we should have England's head—namely, London—in our power."

This awkward admission, reinforced by the cheerful suggestion of a leading Austrian paper that the German Navy should attack ours by surprise in a moment of profound peace, has evidently disturbed the beehives of Berlin, and the Correspondent of *The Times* at that capital has shown that figures and comments, which bear such similarity to each other that they obviously issue from some central source, are being hastily disseminated throughout the Press. The article in the *Cologne Gazette* is an example of these methods. We are asked to believe that the German Staff will be so stupid as to attempt to carry over the sea all the guns, horses, wagons, and impedimenta normally at disposal in each Army Corps region for a campaign against an armed nation on a land frontier, and with such

* It is believed that this officer was Field-Marshal von du Goltz.

assumption the writer has no difficulty in showing that the amount of transport required would be large.

The *Cologne Gazette* must consider that we people here are all infants. No Staff will provide more than the *minimum* force required for victory, and every expedition aimed at England will necessarily have a special composition, whether with regard to the number of horsed guns, the cavalry, or the impedimenta. Every point of this problem has been considered in detail by Lord Roberts and his assistants, and the hypothetical expeditionary force has been allowed everything it requires for success, including 1000 rounds per gun and rifle. Even then the transport only works out to some 220,000 tons for 150,000 men, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons a man. If the *Cologne Gazette* will make inquiries among the German officers of the land and sea services who have been employed upon the study of this problem, it will find that the figures it suggests are as valueless as the conclusions which it draws from them.

The question whether the troops, whatever their numbers may be, can be carried across the North Sea and be safely landed in Great Britain, is mainly one for sailors. Mr. Balfour, in his 1905 speech, omitted the action of the French Navy from his calculations, and did not so much as refer to it. The problem, so far as the German Navy is concerned, is to obtain the local command of the maritime line of communications for a limited period. This period is fixed by the time taken by a fleet of transports, some forty in number, to traverse the distance from the points of departure to the landing-places selected in this country, and to land the troops without serious interference. The time taken will depend upon the speed of the ships, the proximity or reverse of the landing-places chosen, and the adequacy of the landing arrangements. Everyone can work out these details according to his fancy and to the extent of the information at his disposal, but in the end it will probably be agreed that the act of invasion is practicable, if the German Navy can secure local command in the North Sea for forty-eight hours, counting from the time when the transports put to sea.

THE NAVAL PROBLEM

The highest authority of the German Great General Staff has distinctly stated that for the achievement of such a purpose as a successful landing in England, the loss of the German Navy would not be too high a price to pay (vide *The Duties of the General Staff*, fourth edition, 1905, p. 551). The act of invasion must obviously be supported, if not preceded, by the violent offensive of the German Navy. The initiative and surprise are half the battle. There can be little doubt that it is with this main purpose in view that the vast naval preparations in Germany have been undertaken. Against what Power but England are these preparations aimed? The Russian Navy has ceased to count for a time, while France was conquered in her last war when Germany was without a fleet. Are we not right to say with Drake that "the promise of peace from the Prince of Parma, and these mighty preparations of Spain, agree not well together"?

The writer feels bound to say that, although he possesses no special competence in naval matters and thinks it probable that his views will be disputed by some sailors, he has the gravest doubts whether the British Navy can, in all times and in all circumstances, protect the maritime interests of the Empire, and at the same time prevent the powerful and usually concentrated German Navy, aided by diversions on the part of its allies, from obtaining local command in the North Sea for forty-eight hours.

The writer believes that the existing concentration of naval force round our shores cannot be permanent, unless we can be assured that no demand for naval protection will ever reach us from distant seas; that such demands have been continuous throughout our history, and are certain to recur, and that consequently the assurances in question cannot be given; that our position with regard to the higher command at sea in war is highly unsatisfactory;* that the distribution of our ships on several occasions in recent years has not been such as to afford us absolute

* These matters have now been altered for the better.

security in case of an attempted surprise by the German Navy ; that the initiative and surprise are half the battle in the problem under discussion, and that these advantages are more likely to fall to the Germans than to us ; that great concentrations of German fleets take place constantly within striking distance of our shores—e.g. the assembly of 112 German warships of 338,000 tons displacement with 22,000 men and mounting 963 guns, off the mouth of the Jade on September 3 of last year ; that precise assurances given to the British public concerning the withdrawal of capital ships from fleets in commission for repair have been withdrawn ; that Dreadnoughts may prove useless in narrow waters owing to submarines, submersibles, and the arrival of such new weapons as the Hardcastle and Davis torpedoes ; that, supposing this is not the case, the broadside fire of the new German ships is, according to service journals of repute, very greatly superior to that of the *Dreadnought* and *Indomitable* ; that our wire-wound guns are unsparingly criticized by German technical writers, who believe them to be a source of extreme weakness in our great ships ; that no proper bases exist, nor will exist for many years, on the east coast of Britain to support the continuous activity of a fleet in the North Sea ; that our new 27-knot destroyers suffer by comparison with the German G 137, which made 33·9 knots on her trials ; that the progress in the means of naval warfare, not to speak of aerial navigation, is so rapid that some fresh development may at any time render existing warships practically obsolete, whether ours or those of a rival ; that a nation which depends for its sole security upon machines, rather than upon the training of its citizens to arms in addition to its Navy, is destined fatally to disaster ; that a Navy cannot, owing to the intolerable strain which would be thrown upon its personnel, provide for an island at all times that degree of security which continental nations obtain upon their land frontiers by the protection of their land forces ; finally, that it is by means of the million men standard alone that we shall be able, with any regard for financial considerations, to set free the Navy and the

Expeditionary Force for their legitimate duties oversea, and thereby to secure the safety of the British Empire and the adequate support, in time of need, of its friends.

DEFENCE ON LAND

Given the duty laid upon our land forces of resisting 70,000 or 150,000 invaders, what is the best course for us to take? Lord Roberts hypothecates the absence of the Expeditionary Force, and there are, in all conscience, forces enough at work within the Empire and without to compel us to reckon with the absence of this Force, at least for a time. In this case, the Field-Marshal tells us that out of 240,000 more or less trained men remaining at home we have, *pour tout potage*, 40,000 Territorials left to fight with after satisfying the needs of our obligatory and local garrisons, including Ireland. Remaining convinced that 150,000 invaders can come over, Lord Roberts demands a field Army of 600,000 Second Line troops to meet them, reckoning, in accord with Napoleon, that four summarily trained men are equal to one Regular soldier. If the Germans were summarily trained and the Territorials fully trained the boot would be on the other leg. It is certain that even if we accept the lower figure of 70,000 possible invaders, and admit the absence of the Expeditionary Force and the necessity of allotting 200,000 men to obligatory and local garrisons, we are at this moment some 200,000 men short of our requirements. If we hold back two divisions of the Expeditionary Force, thereby weakening our central police reserve by a third, and reckon each man in these two divisions to be equal to one trained foreign soldier, we are still short of 100,000 Territorials. That would be our present position against invasion by 70,000 men, in case of the absence of only four Regular divisions abroad, and though it will be changed if the 100,000 missing Territorials enlist, we may well ask whether our numbers have been fixed to meet the invaders, or whether the numbers of the latter have been conventionally conceived to suit what we hope to get.

The admission that invasion by 70,000 men is not im-

possible, knocks the bottom out of the theories of 1905 and suggests totally new conditions. In these days, when liners are running up to 20,000, 30,000, and even 45,000 tons, the addition of half a dozen of these ships to the fleet of transports might very well mean an addition to the invaders of another 70,000 men or more. Why should the addition of half a dozen liners to the transporting fleet render it incapable of reaching our shores? The real limitation of the numbers, once we admit that the arrival of 70,000 men is not inconceivable, is the question of transport, ports, installations, troops, and railways in Germany. Lord Roberts has limited himself to the figure of 150,000 men, because it is susceptible of the clearest proof that the dispatch of such numbers, with the limitations referred to, is a practicable operation. But the writer believes that it is not a *maximum* figure, and that it might be exceeded even at the North Sea ports, while the ports of the Baltic remain to be considered for what they are worth.

Lords Lansdowne and Midleton made some good points in their speeches, but they appeared to retain their predilections for Regulars and to harp more upon the recent disbandments than upon the constructive proposals of the Field-Marshal. Everybody would prefer Regulars if he could get them. Everyone knows, however, that we cannot get them in sufficient numbers. It would be an excellent thing to restore the 16,800 men lopped off from our establishments by Mr. Arnold-Forster, and the 20,000 reduced by Mr. Haldane. But what chance have we of retrieving these losses? Will the leaders of the Unionist Party undertake to restore them if returned to power? The writer's belief is that they will do nothing of the sort, for experience shows that Governments do not reverse the decisions of their predecessors in matters of this kind, except under stress of some crisis when it is too late.

THE TERRITORIAL FORCE

The writer ventures very respectfully to suggest that Lord Lansdowne and Lord Midleton have not paid sufficient

attention to the main advice of the Elgin Commission—namely, that we should provide powers of expansion outside the Regular Forces of the Crown. The creation of the Territorial Force is the first practical endeavour to carry out this advice, and, as no better measure is at present within our reach, it becomes the duty of everyone to support the movement by every means in his power. To discourage it, said Lord Midleton, would be in the highest degree unpatriotic. But he also said that if all the able-bodied men in this country were trained to arms they would be useless against a surprise or sudden invasion, unless compelled to serve, organized, equipped, and with a nucleus at least of men at present with the colours. Lord Lansdowne also asked whether the numbers demanded by Lord Roberts would be ready, any more than the present soldiers of the Territorial Army, to take the field at a moment's notice against a picked body of invaders.

The reply to this argument is that neither the Field-Marshal, nor anyone else, has ever suggested that we should raise troops which are neither organized nor equipped. So far as readiness for prompt mobilization is concerned, there is no reason why, with proper modern arrangements, the mobilization of the Territorial Force, or of any somewhat similar force of the large numbers suggested by the Field-Marshal, should not eventually be as speedy as, if not speedier than, that of the Regular Army. No one has ever suggested that troops summarily trained can become equal, man for man, to the *Kerntruppe* of the German First Line. It is for this reason that we have to oppose numbers to quality, and it remains true, as Professor Hans Delbruck has so well pointed out, that no matter how great the superiority of a trained Army over a Militia may be, yet this superiority finally has its limits, and a National Militia imposes by its numbers and its weight.

But, says Lord Crewe, "a million men trained in the manner the Special Reserve is trained would mean an addition of something like twenty millions a year to the Army Estimates." Lord Crewe has done an ill service to

the cause of national defence by circulating this opinion throughout the country. Mr. Shee, and other adherents of the National Service League, have shown scores of times, and have given figures and reasons for their belief, that the present establishments of the Territorial Force can be tripled at an additional cost of two and a quarter millions a year. The two figures differ so widely that it is obvious that they have been drawn up upon different assumptions. The writer is not in the secrets of the League, but, so far as he can follow its latest proposals, the League suggests compulsory training; expects an annual contingent of 130,000 men; requires three or four months' training for recruits, with annual trainings of a fortnight for a few years afterwards; and probably considers that all training can be performed in camps during the summer. These proposals eliminate initial expenditure upon barracks to any appreciable extent; they enable us to discard the doles and bribes which we have to offer to voluntary recruits, though doubtless families dependent on serving men would be assisted as in France, and they can be grafted upon the existing organization, *cadres*, and head-quarters of the Territorial Force whenever we are pleased to wake up. It is incorrect to assume that this idea is antagonistic to Mr. Haldane's policy. It is nothing more than the logical extension of that policy to meet new, or at all events newly recognized, and very serious, Imperial commitments.

It is time that the Government should cease to ignore these proposals and to refer to them in terms which come dangerously near to misrepresentation. The writer will not go bail for the accuracy of Mr. Shee's estimates, but it can be shown, from foreign examples, that there is, at least, a *prima facie* case for their accuracy and consequently for some independent and searching inquiry. Bulgaria has 380,000 trained men for an ordinary annual expenditure of under £1,500,000; Rumania 555,000 trained men for £1,807,447; Switzerland 274,000 trained men for £1,642,489; while Japan has now a million trained men for a cost, in 1906-7, ordinary and extraordinary expenditure included,

of £5,322,310. Why should it be impossible for us to do things which are possible for others ? Why should a million men, trained in the manner proposed, add twenty millions to the estimates, and, therefore, bring up the cost of the Territorial Force to twenty-three and a half millions ? If the proposed force were to cost such a sum the danger alluded to by Mr. Haldane at Cambridge last Saturday—namely, that the strength of the Navy would be imperilled—might be realized ; but if, on the other hand, Mr. Shee's figure is nearer the truth, then the situation is entirely altered. Considering that our Navy Estimates may, with our accepted standard, easily rise to fifty millions within a few years, it is fair to ask whether we can find, either on land or sea, better security for the money than the course proposed by Lord Roberts and his supporters. The writer believes that it is on the lines suggested by Lord Roberts and Lord Milner that the future development of the Territorial Force must take place, and that we shall have neither calm nor security until the nation sets its hand to the work pointed out by these experienced and independent guides.

We are nervous, and we affect adversely the nerves of Europe, because we refuse to look many unpleasant facts of the present day squarely in the face, and fail to take those measures which we know to be necessary to secure the tolerable safety of the Imperial fabric. Every soldier knows that if we possess a Territorial Force a million strong every foreign Staff will tear up its plans for invading us, because it will have the sense to recognize that the first échelon of invaders will be eaten up before the second can arrive. The writer believes that eventually, and on financial grounds in default of statesmanlike leading, the country will adopt this plan, and that this end will be attained when it is discovered that, without the co-operation of the Colonies and India, the pretension to build ships against two such populous and wealthy communities as those of the United States and Germany is not one which we can maintain for ever or even for long.

CHAPTER X

INDIAN MILITARY POLICY*

I

THE attack made upon Lord Kitchener by Sir Charles Dilke in the House of Commons during the recent debates upon the East India Loans Bill, and the strange failure of the Government to support their servant, or in fact to do anything but add to the prevailing confusion of ideas at home concerning Indian military policy and strategic railways, compels the writer, very unwillingly, to make an attempt to re-establish the facts. Unwillingly, because Sir Charles Dilke, whether one agrees with him or whether one does not, has been for many years in the forefront of the reformers of military abuses, and has, by the wide range of his knowledge, his independence, and his inexhaustible energy, done more to prevent stagnation of thought in the military order of ideas than any member of Parliament in our time, excepting only Sir John Colomb.

It is not difficult to dispose at once, and briefly, of the contention that Lord Kitchener has imposed his will autocratically upon a timid Government of India and upon a submissive Secretary for India, his Council, and his Majesty's Government. Criticism which pretends to exonerate the regular hierarchy of control from responsibility for the acts of one of its servants can scarcely be regarded as serious, and to suppose that Lord Morley is a statesman who allows himself to be overridden by the will of a subordinate is to entertain the most fantastic illusions concerning the masterful personality of the Secretary for India, as

* From *The Times* of January 4 and 5, 1909.

well as of his manner of comprehending the duties and conducting the affairs of his great department.

From first to last, and whether with regard to frontier railways or the plans for the reorganization and redistribution of the Army in India, the control and responsibility of the home Government have remained entire. It is supremely unfair to a Commander-in-Chief in India who is unable to reply, as well as ridiculous from the constitutional standpoint, to endeavour to fix upon him a responsibility which is, in fact, common to the Government of India and to his Majesty's Government at home.

The strategic railways on the north-west frontier of India were planned with a perfectly clear-cut idea of the military responsibilities which might, in certain eventualities, fall upon the Army in India. These plans were fully examined by the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the decisions taken with regard to them by his Majesty's Government were based upon this examination. Since that time the Anglo-Russian agreement has, happily, been signed, and if, as a consequence, it has been considered legitimate to postpone or suspend the extension of part of these lines, the merit or the blame for such decisions rests again with the Government of India and with his Majesty's Government at home.

Sir Charles Dilke alleges that the second Khaibar war—by which he presumably means the Mohmand expedition of last May—was caused by “a military survey in force of a district in which we could have no interest.” It would be difficult to name a frontier district in which we have a greater military interest than that which has been the object, not of one, but of several surveys on the northern flank of the Khaibar Pass. The object of these surveys has been to discover the best alignment for a railway which, starting from Warsakon the administrative frontier, might debouch in the neighbourhood of our political frontier, and thus enable troops and material of war to be delivered rapidly at the front upon this frontier, beyond which no surveys, so far as the writer is aware, have been made for railway purposes.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the importance which this railway might possess for us in certain eventualities which need not be discussed. Even if the Shinwaris and other tribes, through whose territories the railway alignment might pass, had risen in opposition, it would still have been our duty to persevere in our plan if we had been convinced of its necessity, since the whole of this territory is within our political frontiers and we are responsible for keeping order in it. No opposition worth the name has hitherto been encountered. The Shinwaris, Mullagoris, and Shilmanis stood by us in the recent troubles and their allowances have consequently been increased. The only show of opposition has been that displayed by Khuda Khel and Khwaizai Mohmand, Afghan subjects, to an examination of the alignment near Smatzai and Shinpokh—both of which places are within our political borders—by Mr. Johns, of the Public Works Department, the year before last. No fighting took place, and it is clear from the Viceroy's telegram of November 30, 1907, that the long impunity of the Zakka Khel was responsible to a large extent for the frontier lawlessness of which the show of opposition to Mr. Johns was only one of many examples at the time.

Beyond this single episode there is no evidence to connect the Mohmand rising with the railway survey. In reply to Sir H. Cotton, Mr. Buchanan stated on May 26 that no special grievances were known to exist, and that none had been made known by the tribes. In further replies to Mr. Rutherford and Sir H. Cotton on June 2, Mr. Buchanan stated that there was no direct evidence to show that the continuation of the Loi Shilman Railway was one of the causes which led to the Mohmand rising. On the contrary, added Mr. Buchanan, the Mohmand tribes whose territory is nearest the railway have been friendly throughout the operations. The Under-Secretary doubtless had in mind the Tarakzai Mohmands, the only Mohmand clan whose territories abut on the proposed line. The name of this tribe did not figure in any of the accounts of the fighting during the recent frontier campaign.

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Moreover, Sir G. Roos-Keppel, who has been the recipient of a very gratifying address from the Frontier Islamia Club, which includes all the leading Khans and notables in the Peshawar district, will certainly find it difficult to confirm Sir Charles Dilke's views. On November 12 last the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province was waited upon by another representative gathering almost, if not quite, unprecedented in frontier history. This gathering was composed of Shinwaris, Mullagoris, Shilmanis, Afridis, and of six Mohmand tribes with many others too numerous to mention. Paragraph 6 of the address, which was in Pashtu and was read by a Zakka Khel *malik*, declared that "under your ægis we have secured the advantage of a double road through the Khaibar and the opening up of the Mullagori tract by a new road which has greatly added to our comforts. The Jamrud and Shilman Railway has further ensured our prosperity and the telegraph line has added to the facilities of life." It is difficult to understand how, in the face of all this evidence, Sir Charles Dilke can maintain the position which he has taken up.

By way of adding to the confusion, Mr. Buchanan, during the Committee stage of the East India Loans Bill, made the curious statement that "under the Secretary of State's order the military authorities had power to continue one railway to three hundred miles from Lahore that would cross the frontier by about twenty-three miles." It was necessary, in the first place, that Mr. Buchanan should have clearly stated that it was the administrative and not the political frontier that was in question, for the statement, as made, was liable to misconstruction. As to the twenty-three miles, it is clear that if such authority has been granted, and the distance is measured in a direct line, the railway would project some four or five miles into Afghanistan. Mile 300 is not, however, twenty-three miles from the administrative frontier at Warsak. It is under six miles from this point as the crow flies, and eight and a half miles following the windings of the trace. It is impossible that the public should become informed of the true state of the case when

such inaccurate statements are made by those who should be fully informed of the exact position of affairs.

ARMY REORGANIZATION

Now, if we turn from this question to the larger one of Army reorganization and redistribution in India, we must feel some sympathy with Sir Charles Dilke in his complaint of the secrecy and mystery with which the Government have surrounded their acts. To the Anglo-Indian community all the facts are perfectly well known, but they are not well known to the general public at home, and it would have been wise for the Government to have published, long ago, some clear and comprehensive account, accompanied by a map, of what they were doing and why they were doing it. In default of such light and leading, the average citizen is being led by various speakers and writers to believe that the Army in India has been massed on the North-West Frontier by Lord Kitchener ; that the forces in India have been vastly increased ; that wasteful expenditure has been incurred on buildings, and that the old cantonments occupied formerly throughout India have been largely, if not wholly, depleted of troops to the great danger of British rule. Such, judging by current statements, is the view of the man in the street, and nothing more directly opposed to the truth can very well be imagined.

In his speech upon the India Budget in 1906, Mr. Morley said that Lord Kitchener's scheme and its expense were not ripe for discussion. He declared that he was engaged in active correspondence with the Government of India upon the various questions concerned, and that until that correspondence, which involved some decisions to be taken by the Imperial Defence Committee, had matured, he could not say anything to which it would be profitable for the House of Commons to listen. He would not pledge himself to any line without making perfectly sure that he had all the information to which he could possibly get access and until he had listened to all the arguments which could be brought

against the views which he personally was inclined to take. He stated very fairly the military case as follows :

“ This is not a scheme for increasing the Army. What is contended by way of justification is that, if the scheme had not been adopted, India would have continued to spend £17,000,000 a year on an Army provided with second-rate guns, with too few officers, with bad transport, with defective medical organization, inadequate reserves and stores. It is said that by paying this £2,000,000 extra for five years, and £1,500,000 for recurrent charges for a certain number of years, you will have avoided all the mischiefs and shortcomings which I have described.”

In the following year Mr. Morley referred to military expenditure in India in the following terms :

“ I will go back to the Army. Last year when I referred to this subject I told the House that it would be my object to remove any defects that I and those who advise me might discover in the Army system, and especially, of course, in the schemes of Lord Kitchener. Since then, with the assistance of two very important committees, well qualified by expert military knowledge, I came to the conclusion that an improved equipment was required. . . . Certain changes were necessary in the allocation of units in order to enable the troops to be better trained, and therefore our final conclusion was that the special military expenditure shown in the financial pages of the Blue-book must go on for some years more. But the House will see that we have arranged to cut down the rate of the annual grant, and we have taken care—and this, I think, ought to be set down to our credit—that every estimate for every item included in the programme shall be submitted to vigilant scrutiny here as well as in India. I have no prepossession in favour of military expenditure, but the pressure of facts, the pressure of the situation, the possibility of contingencies that may arise seem to me to make it impossible for any Government or any Minister to acquiesce in the risks on the Indian frontier. We have to consider not only our position with respect to Foreign Powers on the Indian frontier, but

the turbulent border tribes. All these things make it impossible—I say nothing about internal conditions—for any Government or any Minister with a sense of responsibility to wipe out, or in a high-handed or cavalier way to deal with, this military programme.”

From these extracts it is made abundantly clear that Lord Kitchener's plans for the reorganization and redistribution of the Army in India have received not only the approval of the Indian Government, but also the most exhaustive examination and even revision at the hands of the Secretary for India and his advisers in London. While accepting the reforms in their broad lines, Lord Morley has not hesitated to cut down the rate of the annual grant, or, in other words, to delay the accomplishment of these reforms; and no one can deny that since the ultimate responsibility rests with him so also does the power of postponing, amending, or whittling down any measures of defence which may have been proposed.

II

The Indian Army Order of May 14, 1907, stated that with the approval of the Secretary of State, and under the sanction of the Government of India, the then existing Commands—namely, Northern, Western, and Eastern—would cease to exist on the following June 1, and that the Army in India would from this latter date be divided into two portions—namely, the Northern Army and the Southern Army, each under the command of a General Officer with a suitable Staff.

The Northern Army was to include five divisions with head-quarters at Peshawar, Rawal Pindi, Lahore, Meerut, and Lucknow, with the three independent frontier brigades of Kohat, Bannu, and Derajat. The Southern Army was to comprise four divisions with head-quarters at Quetta, Mhow, Poona, and Secunderabad, together with the garrisons of Burma and Aden. The duties of the General Officers appointed to command these two armies were to ensure general uniformity in training and discipline in the

division under their command, and they were made responsible to the Commander-in-Chief for the efficiency of all arms and services under them. The administrative work, previously performed at the head-quarters of the old Commands, was given to the Generals commanding divisions.

Such was the pith of the Army Order, and, though the changes made were rather evolution than revolution, more considerable changes could scarcely have been summed up in briefer terms. They closed the chapter of Indian Army Reform which began with the abolition of the Presidency Armies, and they were designed to place the Army of India, so far as its particular composition and duties admitted, on a modern footing. The modern movement towards reform began at the close of the second Afghan War, during which campaign the inherent defects of a system which had changed little since the Mutiny had become only too fully apparent. In 1879 the Indian Army system and the distribution of forces were still based upon the Report of the Royal Commission of 1859, although the conditions had been greatly altered by the construction of railways, changes of armament, and modifications of frontiers. As the result of inquiry in 1879 by a Commission consisting of a number of officers and officials of great experience in Indian warfare and administration, it was recommended that the Presidential Armies should be abolished and that in their place four Territorial Army Corps should be created, one each in the Punjab, Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. The Commission aimed at a system giving more perfect concentration and fighting power, unification of the Army, and the destruction of the Presidential control, which had been shown by events to be prejudicial to the successful conduct of war.

The long and stupid opposition which these recommendations encountered forms on the whole the most depressing page in the military history of the Indian Army, and it was not until the year 1895, fifteen years after the report had been forwarded from India, that the proposals were in the main adopted, though for Army Corps were substituted

Commands. But in the interval much had changed. Burma and Baluchistan had been occupied, railways had been extended, while changes in the British and Indian Armies and in strategic exigencies had rendered a return to proposals made fifteen years earlier both militarily inexpedient and administratively unsound. The Russian menace hung more heavily over India, while as time went on the pressure of the frontier tribes began to demand enhanced facilities for rapid deployment of troops upon the North-West Frontier. Staffs and troops in the commands and districts were not organized or distributed in the manner demanded by modern war, and the want of system throughout both administration and command was painfully evident.

LORD KITCHENER'S REORGANIZATION

Lord Kitchener reached India in 1902, and at once set to work upon the reorganization of the Army on the principle of making the best and most economical use of existing forces. The Army Order of October 28, 1904, divided the country into nine territorial divisional areas and organized the forces contained by them in nine divisions and three independent brigades, exclusive of Burma and Aden; and as this organization implied a considerable movement of troops, and as this again was dependent upon the provision of the necessary accommodation, the full fruits of these reforms could only be gathered in the fullness of time. By the same Army Order the then existing commands were divided into Northern, Western, and Eastern Corps, and the Lieutenant-General's command at Madras was abolished. In Burma no change was made. The plan was to distribute the troops according to the requirements of the defence of India, to enable all arms to be trained together at suitable centres, and to give larger powers to officers commanding divisions. Each division was to consist of one cavalry and three infantry brigades, with divisional troops comprising cavalry, artillery, engineers, and pioneers. In each divisional area there were reserved, besides, such additional

troops for the maintenance of internal order within the area as appeared to be necessary in the event of the withdrawal of the division for service in the field, but little attention has been directed to this adherence to the principles of 1859 and 1879. In short, the keynote of the change was to secure complete and thorough training for war in recognized war formations and to enable the Army to take the field in the highest state of efficiency, while leaving behind it, in each divisional area, sufficient troops for the maintenance of public order in support of the civil power. Intimately allied with all these changes was the new system of devolution of responsibility, and to this again was in a manner attached the burning question of the higher administration of the Army in India, and the position of the old Military Department. However inseparable this latter question may be from the history of Lord Kitchener's command in India, it is not necessary to allude to it now further than by saying that, though the Homeric combat which was fought over this question delayed progress for long, there was no disagreement on the part of Lord Curzon with Lord Kitchener's proposals for reorganizing and strengthening the Indian Army, proposals which received the then Viceroy's unwavering support.

The assumptions frequently made that these reforms implied a large increase in the Army and the allotment of the bulk of the expenditure to barracks are both incorrect. It was, indeed, found practicable to place in the field an army nearly double the strength that was previously considered possible, and this is the purpose which the completion of these reforms will achieve; but the end was sought by improved utilization of existing means after long and elaborate examination, and not by the creation of fresh forces. There is practically no difference worth speaking about between the numbers of cavalry regiments and battalions of infantry existing in 1902 and 1908. As to the artillery, there are actually fewer native batteries now existing than there were in 1902. Lord Kitchener found four field batteries of the Haidarabad contingent armed

with obsolete six-pounder muzzle-loading smooth-bore guns, and he desired either to fit them out with a better gun or to abolish them. The latter course was taken. Lord Kitchener also desired to add six more native mountain batteries to the eighteen existing in India, ten of which were native, but hitherto only two of these new native batteries have been raised. Thus the broad and prudent principle of retaining the artillery in the hands of Europeans has been maintained, but neither in Lord Kitchener's time nor before his arrival has this principle been elevated to the rank of an awe-inspiring fetish. As to the infantry, a few battalions of doubtful worth have disappeared, and others recruited from more martial races have taken their place. There has been a slight increase in numbers, but substantially the figures are unchanged. The Reserve has been increased, but its expansion to the figure demanded by the Commission of 1879 remains an ideal for the future.

It may, of course, be said that the signature of the Anglo-Russian Agreement authorized a large reduction of the Indian Army. But, apart from the folly of relying upon paper guarantees, the Army in India was not, at the time this agreement was signed, nor is it now, in a situation to defend India against Russia and to fulfil our engagements to Afghanistan for more than a few months, after which lapse of time large reinforcements from home were, and would be still, required. Moreover, the frontier tribes continue to obtain better rifles and more of them every year, and we have only during the past year experienced the necessity for assembling a comparatively considerable force in the neighbourhood of Peshawar. The Army in India remains for practical purposes at the standard recommended by the Peel Commission in 1859—a standard which was for internal security alone.

The bulk of the expenditure under Lord Kitchener's scheme has hitherto been upon new artillery, new rifles, ammunition columns, reserves of ammunition, transport, and equipment; only a small proportion has gone to the accommodation necessary for the better distribution of the

troops. The ideal is that each brigade should be organized in peace as for war, and that it should be immediately under the hand of, and commanded and trained by, its own brigadier. This ideal is still a long way from attainment, but it has been found possible so to organize and distribute the troops as to meet the chief requirements of the situation. In the initial scheme of redistribution some mistakes were made, as there are in every military plan of a wide-reaching character, but these were rectified as inquiry and experience threw fresh light upon the requirements of the situation.

DISTRIBUTION OF TROOPS

Anyone possessing a monthly Army List, and a map of India, no matter how indifferent the map may be, can judge for himself, by marking upon this map the head-quarters of the nine divisions, how baseless and absurd is the assumption that the Army of India has been massed upon the frontiers. The Northern Army, with head-quarters at Murree, has its point at Peshawar, where there stands the 1st Division distributed among adjacent garrisons, together with the movable columns organized in 1899 to support the Tribal Militia and levies on the frontier. The remaining four divisions of the Northern Army are echeloned back with head-quarters at Pindi, Lahore, Meerut, and Lucknow, the latter town being some 800 miles from Peshawar. The Southern Army similarly, with head-quarters at Poona, has its point at Quetta, where there stand the Staff and part of the troops of the 4th Division. The remaining divisions of the Southern Army have their head-quarters at Mhow, Poona, and Secunderabad respectively. The divisions are not massed at the places shown as their head-quarters. The 8th (Lucknow) Division, for example, garrisons Lucknow, Naini Tal, Sitapur, Fyzabad, Manipur, Allahabad, Benares, Cawnpur, Fort William, Barrackpur, Dinapur, and Lebong, besides some forty to fifty other places where there are detachments of one class of troops or another, including Volunteers. If there is an army in the world which has no

cause to complain of over-concentration it is the Army of India.

It will be obvious to anyone who examines the localities occupied by the divisions, first, that the distribution of the troops among the two armies corresponds with strategical exigencies, and, secondly, that the divisions of each Army have been so disposed in rear of each other as to utilize the carrying power of the main lines of rail to the greatest advantage during any strategic concentration.

It is strange that a chief who has, more than any other general alive or dead, excepting only von Moltke, displayed a perfect knowledge of and competence in the art of railway strategy should be supposed to have neglected the powers which railways confer upon an army from the point of view of concentration. This idea is the offspring of the wholly inaccurate belief that Lord Kitchener has massed the Army upon the frontier, whereas, in full accord with his Majesty's Government, he has conveniently dispersed it along the main lines of rail, whilst providing, by means of manifold precautions and preparations, for its rapid concentration in war. The recent frontier campaign, though not, of course, a very high test, showed very fairly that the system was good, and only required development and completion.

The point of each Army is directed towards the North-West Frontier because the chief military interest of India is there, nor does the policy which we continue on the frontier give any hope that this situation will be modified so long as this policy lasts. But because the 8th, or Lucknow Division, may be destined for delivery at Peshawar in case of serious war upon the frontier, and the 9th, or Secunderabad Division, may be similarly destined for concentration at Quetta, nothing whatsoever prevents alternative plans of concentration to suit the occurrence of troubles elsewhere. At the same time, it must be remembered that the respective duties of Army and police in India were defined in an authoritative manner in 1860, 1887, and 1902, and that, while the ultimate use of the Army in aid of the civil power follows as a matter of course in case of need, this is not the

primary reason for the existence of an army. The accepted principle is that it is the duty of the police, and not of the Army, not only to prevent and detect crime, but also to secure the peace of the country ; while that it is the function of the Army, and not of the police, to suppress rebellion and to resist invasion. When we find a detachment of Highlanders serving as warders at Alipur Gaol we have to assume that the local police is inadequate or untrustworthy, but if the Army of India is expected to make good the deficiencies of the Indian police, then it is time that we were given some fresh definitions of the principles above enumerated. Failing such new definitions, the Army in India must continue to be organized, distributed, and trained in the manner best suited to effect the main purposes for which it exists.

Given the fidelity of the Indian Army and the preservation of the main lines of railway, the Army in India is capable of suppressing a rebellion wherever it may occur. Owing to the rapid extension of railways, the excellence of the armament and the training of the troops, and the preparations made for rapid mobilization and transport by rail, the first symptoms of rebellion should be suppressed with a celerity and a vigour that would leave little temptation for a recurrence of an outbreak. Even if our firm faith in the loyalty of the Indian Army should ever, contrary to all our hopes and beliefs, prove to be misplaced, we are in a far better position for rapidly despatching reinforcements to India from home than we were in 1857, and we have many more reinforcements to send. During the Mutiny many sailing vessels were employed to carry troops to India, while four screw steamers which had undertaken to perform the journey in seventy-four days occupied respectively 90, 100, 107, and 121 days on the voyage. As a result, not a man had arrived from England or was within 400 miles of the scene of action when Delhi fell. We can now throw 150,000 men into India within a month if we go to work about it the right way.

It is outside the *cadre* of this chapter to describe in

detail the many improvements which have been made during the last few years in the establishments of the Army in India and in the condition of the sepoy, but a few examples may be given of the character of these reforms. The Military Accounts Branch has been reorganized. By the completion of the gun foundry at Cossipore, the rifle factory at Ishapur, the gun-carriage factory at Jubbulpore, and the cordite factory in the Nilgiris, India has become to a large extent self-supporting in material of war, and all this machinery is now in full working order. A Staff College has been built and is doing splendid work under a first-rate commandant. The medical service continues to wage successful war against malaria and other diseases. The greatest attention has been paid to the well-being of the sepoy. His kit money has been raised, and boot money has been given to him. In addition to recognized furlough, free passages are now granted to men called home on urgent private affairs. Silladar cavalry have been given free grass and forage when on the march, while grass and dairy farms have been established all over the country. A new and much more generous scheme of pensions has been instituted, and has added much to the popularity of service in the Native Army. Finally, the King-Emperor informed his Indian subjects in his proclamation of October last that his appreciation of the services of the Indian Army would be shown in a substantial form at the New Year; and *The Times* has recorded in the last few days the honours awarded and the increases of pay granted in fulfilment of this promise. Never at any previous time have the interests of the Indian Army received more constant and more ample recognition.

CONCLUSION

Certainly, the Indian Army, and the Army in India as a whole, are not perfect compared with the high standard of organization of the national armies of the Great Powers. We can scarcely hope, or even desire, in the present temper of a section of the people, that we should raise locally a great

Army on the principle of short service and large reserves, whereby alone a great Army can be created at a small cost. "The Army in India," said John Lawrence, "must always be largely composed of natives. It should not be our object merely to make it a powerful machine formidable to our outside enemies. We should, in the first instance, aim at making it a thoroughly safe one." In a mercenary force the regiments must be contented or they cannot be safe, and even if the improvements made, and to be made, in the condition of the sepoy burden somewhat the Budget of India, India can afford to pay, for her financial position might well be the envy of any Power in the world.

Drawing together the various threads of these questions, we must conclude—that the strategic railways on the North-West Frontier had nothing to do with the outbreak of the tribes ; that, whether in the matter of these railways or in that of the reorganization and redistribution of the Army in India, the responsibility and control of his Majesty's Government have remained entire ; that the Army in India has not been massed upon the frontier, but precisely the contrary ; that the bulk of the fresh expenditure incurred has been upon rifles, guns, ammunition, transport, pay, pensions, allowances, and other services destined to increase the mobilizable effectives of the Army and to improve the condition of the sepoy ; and finally, that the military policy of India is in safe hands and has been steadily directed to the attainment of a higher standard of efficiency and to the better and more economical utilization of existing forces.

CHAPTER XI

THE ABOLITION OF THE MILITARY SUPPLY DEPARTMENT*

REUTER's recent message from Calcutta, announcing the intended abolition of the Military Supply Department on March 31 next, will doubtless be followed in the course of a few days by the presentation of papers to Parliament explaining the reasons of the Secretary for India for terminating, in a somewhat abrupt and unexpected manner, the compromise brought about by his predecessor in office and by the late Government upon the once burning question of the higher administration of the Army in India.

It will probably appear, when the papers are presented—if we have attained to such a state of grace that we can examine the case upon its merits—that Lord Morley has taken action on his own responsibility and initiative, and solely in what he conceives to be the best interests of efficient and economical administration. If it can further be shown, as the writer thinks it can be, that none of the evils anticipated by those who oppose this step are likely to arise, and that this final consummation of Lord Kitchener's original proposals has been brought about in the natural order of events as the result of administrative experience and after full inquiry, there will be little room for any serious opposition.

It will be remembered that the policy of the late Government in all this matter was to terminate as speedily as possible, and in the best manner that the nature of the case admitted at the time, the intolerable and damaging conflict

* From *The Times* of March 2, 1909.

which had raged for so long on the subject of the administration of the Army in India. The policy of Mr. Balfour's Government was fully set forth in Mr. Brodrick's despatch of May 31, 1905. It was designed to terminate, or almost to terminate, the dual control of the Army in India by placing the Commander-in-Chief in India in charge of a newly-named Army Department which was invested with all the powers and duties of the old Military Department, excepting only those relating to supply, which were confided to a separate Department whose chief became an ordinary member of the Governor-General's Council, but was not intended to supply a military equipoise to the authority of the Commander-in-Chief.

This arrangement was obviously a compromise, and it completely satisfied neither side. Soldiers and others who held firmly to the principles advocated in Lord Kitchener's Minute of January 1, 1905, found that these principles had been departed from in important particulars, and they considered that the existence of the Military Supply branch as a separate Department, though harmless, was both expensive and unnecessary. Lord Curzon also considered that the position, powers, and duties of the Military Supply Member would not provide the safeguards which were, in his opinion, indispensable, and in his telegram of August 10, 1905, he declared that the new Military Supply Department "would involve an unpardonable waste of public money, and that it would be better to dispense with the Department altogether." Nevertheless, the compromise was agreed to by the Secretary of State in Council and by the Governor-General in Council, and after Lord Minto's arrival in India everyone set to work to make the best of it.

It was at this moment that the present Government came into office and determined, after full investigation and rather as a choice of evils than in the belief that finality had been attained, to abide by the compromise and not to reopen the whole question. But there was still room for the exercise of statesmanship. Proposed rules of business for the future administration of the Army in India had been invited from

the Government of India by Mr. Brodrick, and these did not reach London until after the change of Government. It consequently became the duty of Mr. Morley to examine and revise them. While accepting most of them in their entirety, the new Secretary for India introduced some important modifications into those concerning the Secretary to the Government of India in the Army Department, with the purpose of securing for this Secretary, and fully in accord with the spirit of Lord Kitchener's proposals, as full powers and responsibilities as were possessed by the Secretaries of the other Departments of the Government of India.

THE ARMY DEPARTMENT

As finally approved, the rules of business gave to the Secretary in the Army Department very important powers. He was made a member of the Advisory Council and of the Mobilization Committee. He was entitled to call for papers at any stage of the discussion of any subject assigned to the Army Department, and to record for the consideration of the Member in charge a note on any matter. All matters entered in a schedule approved by the Governor-General were to be referred to the Secretary before orders were issued. Any case of special importance and urgency, and at any stage, might be submitted by the Secretary direct to the Governor-General; and, finally, in case of any departure from these rules, the Secretary was bound to bring the matter to the notice of the Governor-General.

By his amendments to the rules Mr. Morley sought to ensure that all matters, before they reached the Commander-in-Chief, as Member in charge of the Army Department, should have passed through the hands of the Secretary. The Secretary for India was advised, and considered, that only by giving the Secretary in the Army Department these large powers could the supremacy of the civil government be real and effectual, and that only by these means could the Governor-General in Council be in a position to fulfil the duty cast upon him by the Statute of 1833—namely,

of superintending, directing, and controlling military affairs in India. Mr. Morley did not flatter himself that any rules which the wit of man could devise on paper would turn mortals into machines, or secure, absolutely and without doubt, ideal information and counsel for the Governor-General, but he took the best means open to him to achieve this purpose, and no Minister could do more.

It is necessary to explain that, following upon these rules as amended, and upon the terms of Mr. Morley's despatch of February 9, 1906, the members of the Army Headquarters Staff in India acted in two separate and distinct capacities and consequently performed two separate and distinct functions. On the one hand they continued, as before, to perform their duties as members of this Staff in all matters within the control of the Commander-in-Chief as such, and on the other they acted as Departmental officers of the Army Department though without any of the powers of a Secretary. There was not a complete amalgamation of the Army Headquarters Staff with the new Army Department. For some purposes, and some purposes only, were the members of this Staff brought within the Army Department, and no member engaged upon the work of the Army Department had power to submit direct to the member in charge of the Army Department, that is to say to the Commander-in-Chief, any case in that Department or to issue orders in regard to such case on behalf of the Government of India.

These amendments did not interfere in any way with military efficiency or with the rapid conduct of public business. They were consequently accepted readily by soldiers whose sole object had been throughout to secure the speedy and efficient conduct of the business of the Army. On the other hand, the amendments hedged round with even more abundant safeguards the fundamental principle that the Government of India had been confided by Parliament to the Governor-General in Council, subject only to the statutory powers of the Secretary of State, and they were thus well designed to compose a controversy of long stand-

ing, and to give to the disputants on either side full satisfaction for all their legitimate demands.

THE COMPROMISE AT WORK

The practice of the last three years, so far as the writer can ascertain, has conformed with the theory. The Secretary in the Army Department has received and has exercised all the powers conferred upon him. He has gone direct to the Governor-General whenever necessary. He has attended Councils and has explained any cases when explanations have been necessary. He has been made a member of the various committees and has served upon them. In all matters relating to the Army Department members of the Head-quarters Staff have approached the Member through the Secretary. Every case requiring the sanction of the Governor-General in Council or of the Secretary of State has been originated in a division of the Head-quarters Staff, worked out by its chief, who now has a complete knowledge of all previous decisions, and then passed to the Secretary in the Army Department. Each head of a division has kept a schedule of his work and has sent a copy of it periodically to the Secretary, who has thus been kept properly posted and has become the avenue through which all the important work of the Army must pass. Upon the chief committees the Secretary has kept touch with all that is going on, while the Governor-General can nominate to serve upon any one of these committees anybody whom he is pleased to select. By these means the Governor-General has complete access to all papers at any time, and the fullest knowledge of all military proposals and transactions. Finally, as regards finance, the business of the Army is now administered, as originally suggested by Lord Kitchener, by the Financial Secretary in the Army Department, who is deputed for the purpose by the Finance Member of Council. A more complete system of checks and counter-checks could scarcely have been imagined by the most suspicious and hypersensitive critic of the "military autocrat."

The Military Supply Department, like the Army Depart-

ment, consists of a certain number of divisions, each under its own chief. It deals with contracts, ordnance, remounts, military works, clothing, the Indian Medical Service, and the Royal Indian Marine, while its finance is controlled in the same manner as that of the Army Department. A common characteristic of all these divisions, hitherto under the Supply Member, is that the work belonging to them is of a special and technical character and must consequently be worked out, in each case, by the chief of the division concerned.

After a year's trial of the new system the Government of India can scarcely have failed to report that, thanks to the loyal co-operation of all, the Brodrick compromise was working well. There is no reason to believe that the last two years have told any different tale. So far as the writer can judge from report, there has been no congestion of work and no friction. There has been, of course, a great deal of correspondence, which will in future be unnecessary, between the Army and the Supply Departments, but this was inherent in the nature of the compromise. The work of the Army has proceeded smoothly, while the excellent practice of allowing heads of divisions to work out their own plans, with that full knowledge of precedents which was formerly bottled up in the old Military Department, has developed, as it always must, a proper sense of financial responsibility. It is exceedingly improbable that any wild-cat schemes of any kind can be initiated ; and it is practically impossible, if they are initiated, that they can fail to meet with complete exposure. The misnamed Mobilization Committee, which is in effect, or at least will be in future, the Army Council of India, examines every plan and every proposal of any importance, and upon this Committee, apart from any Member whom the Viceroy may appoint, there are always at least three generals of high standing belonging to the Indian Army. If any Member dissents from any decision he is bound to record this dissent, which is then attached to the proceedings and forms part of them. The Secretary in the Army Department is also present

with a watching brief for the Governor-General, and the Secretary himself is appointed by the Viceroy with the sanction of the Secretary of State. Every single new measure connected with finance or reorganization, over and above the sanctioned budget, has to be approved by the Secretary for India, who naturally refers it to the India Council, or to his Financial and Military Departments as the case may be. Since Lord Morley has at his disposal two generals of distinction of the Indian Army, namely, Sir Charles Egerton and Sir O'Moore Creagh, a further security is obtained that no measure detrimental to the interests of the Indian Army can escape correction.

REASONS FOR CHANGE

It will naturally be asked why, if the new system has worked so well, it should now be changed. The answer is that its success is not in any way dependent upon, nor due to, the preservation of the Military Supply branch as a separate Department; that the criticism of Lord Curzon retains all its force; and that the retention of the Supply Member on the Governor-General's Council, while offering no important safeguards better or even as good as those which are fully provided by the other means and measures above described, is only an unnecessary expense. It is very possible that with the recollection of all the din of 1905 in their minds the Government of India may have deprecated the raising of this question again, but they can scarcely have failed to remark, and probably with unanimity, that the existence of the Supply branch as a separate Department is opposed to all sound principles of economical administration, and that sooner or later steps would have to be taken to simplify the system and to reduce its cost. The experience of three years has been ample for a complete test, and, if Lord Morley and his Council now find themselves in agreement with the Government of India on this point, reasonable people can rest satisfied that this chapter of history may be considered closed.

It seems likely that the Supply Department and its Secretariat will disappear on April 1, and that this will represent a saving of upwards of £10,000 annually; that ordnance and military works will become extra divisions of the Head-quarters Staff; that clothing will be transferred to the Adjutant-General's division and remounts to that of the Quartermaster-General, while that the Indian Medical and Marine services will be placed directly under the Secretary to the Army Department, whose staff will be correspondingly increased. These all appear to be reasonable changes, except, perhaps, the last, and it is considered by some authorities that it might be better that the Indian Medical and Marine services should be placed under the Home Department.

ANTICIPATION OF CRITICISMS

The main criticisms which either have already been made or will be made of these changes are, first, that the Governor-General is deprived of a second military opinion in Council, and, secondly, that too much work will be thrown upon the Commander-in-Chief. The reply to the first criticism is that there is no reason why the Army, which contains some 300,000 men, should be represented on the Council by two Members when other departments, dealing with the interests of 300 millions of people, are represented by a single Member. The Governor-General, whether in Council or out of it, has now the fullest means for becoming acquainted with the opinions of the best officers of the Indian Army, whether these officers are in accord with the Commander-in-Chief or whether they are not, and whether the chief is an officer of the British or the Indian Army. If the Governor-General is a wise man he will avail himself of these means, and, if he is not, nothing will prevent him from doing stupid things. The Secretary for India is similarly supplied with expert advisers, and, though Viceroys and Secretaries of State will never be wholly free from human failings, it can only be the language of exaggeration which can suggest that the public interests and those of the Indian Army are not,

so far as foresight and statesmanship can provide, fully safeguarded by the new arrangements.

The criticism which suggests that the Commander-in-Chief will be overburdened with work neglects many important considerations connected with the new system of administration, inspection, and command. Certainly, some slight but not excessive additional work will be thrown upon the Chief, but against this must be set the fact that he will be saved the troublesome correspondence with the Supply Department. The work of the new divisions of the Head-quarters Staff remains, as under the Supply Member, mainly of a technical nature. It can only be dealt with by the heads of divisions, and the duty of the Chief in relation to it will mainly be one of supervision and general control. In relation to the troops, the work of the Commander-in-Chief has been greatly lightened by recent reforms of which the critics take little or no account. The divisional commanders have had delegated to them considerable financial and administrative responsibilities which go far to relieve the congestion which was the normal state of affairs, in all matters relating to the Army, under the highly centralized and inefficient rule of the old Military Department. Between the Chief and the divisional commanders there stand, in the positions of Inspectors, the new Army commanders, who are responsible for the inspection and efficiency of the armies under them. This delegation of responsibility and this decentralization of work, which have been effected both at Head-quarters and in the commands, relieve the Commander-in-Chief of many harassing duties with which he was formerly burdened. It is sufficient, so far as the troops are concerned, if he exercises a general supervision over the field efficiency of the Army, and acquaints himself with the qualifications of the higher commanders and with the general state of their commands. The tours of the Commander-in-Chief will naturally be made to coincide as far as possible with those of the Viceroy, and even when this is not the case railways and telegraphs have overcome many of the old obstacles to rapid communication. In case of

emergency, and in the absence of the Commander-in-Chief, the Viceroy has at his disposal the Secretary to the Army Department and the members of the Head-quarters Staff, particularly the Chief of the Staff, who will usually be an officer of the Indian Army, and always an officer of high rank, with great experience, and capable of representing the Chief's views upon military matters of importance.

The conclusion which emerges from all these considerations is that the abolition of the Supply branch as a separate Department is the natural and necessary consequence of the measures of reform which have been introduced into the higher administration of the Army in India, and that this abolition is in the interest of the sound and economical gestion of affairs. The paramount civilian control of the Governor-General over the Army is in no way dependent on the maintenance of the Supply branch as a separate Department, but is dependent upon other checks and safeguards wholly independent of the existence of this redundant Department. The abolition of this shadow of a counterpoise to the authority of the Commander-in-Chief terminates the last vestige of dual control in the Army, enables an Army Council of the home pattern to be created in India, simplifies and consolidates the military administration, and will, in case of need, enable this administration to discharge in the most rapid and efficacious manner those onerous obligations and responsibilities which may, at any moment, devolve upon it.

CHAPTER XII

LORD KITCHENER'S WORK IN INDIA*

AFTER seven eventful years spent with single-minded devotion in the service of the Empire, Lord Kitchener returns to our shores to deserve the thanks of his grateful fellow-countrymen.

We work our champions hard. From the year 1886, when he was made Governor-General of the Red Sea littoral, down to the present hour, Lord Kitchener has been continually in harness. He has traversed distances, including 65,000 miles in India, before which the ineffectual fires of many great travellers must pale. He has spent long years in trying climates and has been occupied with duties of great danger and responsibility. He has conducted the two greatest campaigns of our day to a favourable issue. As general he has been fortunate, as administrator brilliant, and as statesman profound.

Himself the most loyal of subordinates, he has never failed to accord to his lieutenants that firm and undeviating support which assures success because it creates confidence in every heart. He has carried to a successful conclusion every work to which he has set his hand, and has shown a steadfastness of purpose which his fellow-countrymen, who value character, prize above everything else. The cheers which have greeted his progress through Australasia and the gratifying reception which has been given to him in the United States show that the great English-speaking democracies of the world delight to do him honour, and unite in affirming—Here at least, thank God, is a man.

* From *The Times* of April 27, 1910.

Lord Kitchener's work in India does not stand out before the general public with all the sharpness of outline that might be desired. The India Office, not wholly exempt from an Oriental leaning to secretiveness, has never deigned to explain either the purpose or the scope of the military reforms which Lord Kitchener has planned and carried out. Behind the veil of mystery which, sometimes fortunately, conceals from the British public the actions of all their servants east of Suez, we have seen dimly figures moving, but the action of the players has escaped precise definition, and there are probably not a dozen men in England who could give a clear and consecutive account of what Lord Kitchener has done in India and why he has done it.

Lord Kitchener will tell us little except that it was upon the solid foundations laid by his predecessors that he built, and that it was only thanks to the support and confidence of his hierarchic chiefs that he was able to build at all. The bases upon which Lord Kitchener reconstructed our military power in the East were the splendid corps of officers of the Army in India, the fine material of martial races, the zeal and capacity of the Indian Civil Service, the loyalty of many feudatory princes, and the firm friendship of the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal. Great assets these were, but they would have little profited without the skill of the master builder.

When he reached India Lord Kitchener found that the Army united great merits with grave defects. It did not provide that offensive power that could properly have been expected from its numbers and its cost. It did not exploit all the martial races which were available for its service, and it used others, softer in texture and of little service in serious war. The distribution of the Army was defective and had not been altered to accord with railway facilities and a changed strategic situation. It was not self-supporting in material of war, and the armament of the troops, though improving, was still much behind the times. There was scarcely a single military requisite that had been completely supplied to the four poorly organized divisions which formed

the Field Army, and scarcely any preparations had been made for maintaining the Army in the field. The content of the Indian Army had not been assured by adequate provision for its material well-being. Lastly, the higher administration of the Army was laborious in operation and inefficient in results owing a system of dual control which divorced the responsibility appertaining to the Commander-in-Chief from the power which rested in the Military Department.

Lord Kitchener's plans for the redistribution and the reorganization of the Army received Lord Curzon's unwavering support up to the time when the unfortunate differences of opinion which arose on the question of the Military Department caused a grave crisis and arrested for long the execution of reforms. The battle was one which had to be fought in the vital interests of military efficiency, and no other soldier but Lord Kitchener could have fought it successfully against the authority and the talent which were arrayed in opposition. Thanks first to the decision of Mr. Balfour's Government, and next to the settlement finally made by Lord Morley, the question of the Military Department was ultimately laid at rest. Mr. Brodrick's despatch of May 31, 1905, placed the Commander-in-Chief in India in charge of a newly named Army Department, which was invested with all the powers and duties of the old Military Department excepting only those relating to Supply, which were confided to a separate department whose chief became an ordinary member of the Governor-General's Council, but was not intended to provide a military equipoise to the authority of the Commander-in-Chief.

The compromise worked well. Military efficiency and the rapid conduct of public business became possible, while the supremacy of the Civil Government remained intact. But the experience of three more years showed that the success of the new system was neither due to, nor dependent upon, the preservation of the Supply branch as a separate Department, and that, while it offered no safeguards which the revised rules of business had not amply secured, it caused

unnecessary expenditure which could not easily be defended. On Lord Morley's initiative the Supply Department was, therefore, abolished in the spring of last year and its duties were distributed among the various divisions of the Head-quarters Staff.

Lord Kitchener reached India in 1902, but it was not till the autumn of 1904 that his military projects began to take shape. On October 28 of that year an Army Order divided the country into nine territorial divisional areas, and arranged the forces contained in them in nine divisions and three independent brigades, exclusive of Burma and Aden. By the same Order the then existing Commands were distributed among the Northern, Western, and Eastern Corps, and the Lieutenant-General's Command in Madras was abolished. The plan was to redistribute the troops according to the requirements of the defence of India, to train all arms together at suitable centres, and to give larger powers to divisional commanders.

Decentralization of work and devolution of responsibility were the keynotes of this as of all Lord Kitchener's reforms. In each divisional area, in addition to the field troops, forces were reserved sufficient to supply the obligatory garrisons and the mobile columns necessary for the maintenance of internal security. The idea was to secure complete and thorough training for war in recognized war formations, and to enable the whole of the nine divisions to take the field in a high state of efficiency, while leaving behind them sufficient troops for the support of the civil power in the repression of rebellion.

On May 14, 1907, another Army Order abolished the commands of 1904 and substituted for them a Northern and a Southern Army, each under a General Officer with a suitable staff. The Northern Army included five divisions, with head-quarters at Peshawar, Rawal Pindi, Lahore, Meerut, and Lucknow, with the three independent frontier brigades of Kohat, Bannu, and Derajat. The Southern Army comprised four divisions, with head-quarters at Quetta, Mhow, Poona, and Secunderabad, besides the garri-

sons of Burma and Aden. The Army Commanders were Inspectors, whose duties were to ensure uniformity of training and discipline, and to be responsible to the Commander-in-Chief for the efficiency of all arms and services under them. The administrative work previously performed by the Commands was delegated to generals commanding divisions.

Lord Kitchener's plan for the redistribution of the Army was much attacked, because it was much misunderstood. The cantonments given up were those which no longer required troops. The troops were not massed by divisions, as commonly supposed, but by divisional areas, and in drawing up his plans for garrisoning these areas Lord Kitchener worked closely with the civil authorities, and in no case left unguarded any likely centre of disaffection. It will be plain to anyone who studies the new distribution in an impartial spirit that it corresponds with strategical exigencies, and that the various divisions are echeloned behind each other in a manner to utilize to the full the carrying capacity of the main lines of rail. If the point of both Armies is directed towards the North-West frontier, which remains the chief military interest of India, there is nothing to prevent a concentration in any other direction, whether for external or internal defence.

Lord Kitchener's plan was not to expand the numbers of the Army to any appreciable extent, but to utilize existing forces better and more economically. A certain number of inefficient units were mustered out, and the regiments retained were renumbered on a single roster so that all might feel that they stood on an equal footing. Lord Kitchener also sought to improve and widen the recruiting grounds of the Army and caused them to be exploited by an expert staff. Thanks to the friendly attitude of the Nepal Durbar the Gurkha battalions were increased to twenty, while the strain upon the Magars and Gurungs was relieved by the enlistment of Khas, Limbus, and Rais. Sikhism was also encouraged, and the Sikh elements in the Army reinforced by companies composed of Labanas, Kamboks, and Khattris,

who were enlisted without prejudice to the interests of regiments recruiting among the Jats. The Punjabi Mussulman element in the Army was increased by levies in the martial tribes of the Salt Range, Murree Hills, Punch, and other districts bordering on Kashmir, while many clans of Pathan tribes which had not previously enlisted into the Army were attracted to its ranks as well as to those of the popular local Militia. Hazaras from the Hazarajat came in as pioneers ; Ghilzais, Brahuis, and Baluchis into the Camel Corps ; Kachens, Shans, and Karens for the Military Police in Burma ; while the Rajputs of Jodhpore, who had formerly held aloof, and the Jats of Bikanir, acquired the habit of serving in the Army.

The sepoy has greatly benefited during Lord Kitchener's tenure of the Command-in-Chief. Thanks to the wise generosity of Lord Morley and his Council, the pay of all ranks has been much improved, while a higher pension scale has increased the popularity of service. The clothing regulations have been altered in the soldier's interest, while kit money has been raised and boot money allowed. Fares have been reduced for men on furlough, while free passes have been allowed to men called home on urgent private affairs. Silladar Cavalry have been given free grass and forage on the march and have thus had their greatest grievance removed. Lastly, grass and dairy farms have been established all over India, and the Medical service has been very successful in reducing the waste in the Army from disease.

It has been the object of Lord Kitchener, as it was the object of Lord Lawrence, not only to make the Indian Army formidable but to make it safe. The principle of maintaining the artillery mainly in the hands of Europeans has not been departed from, and there are now fewer native batteries in existence than there were when Lord Kitchener arrived in India. If, in the present phase through which India is passing, attempts made to undermine the loyalty of the Indian Army have occasionally given grounds for anxiety, there is no reason to doubt that the greatly improved position of

the sepoy has done much to defeat the machinations of evildoers.

Under Lord Kitchener's energetic impulsion the training of the Army in India has shared in the general advance which has taken place at home. If the operations in Tibet, the Mohmand country, and the Bazar Valley did not throw a great strain upon the Army, they proved at all events that the preparations for war were adequate so far as they were tested, and that the comrade Armies were in the highest state of discipline and efficiency. The Quetta Staff College has provided India with the means for obtaining instruction in the higher branches of the military art, while the factories at Cossipore, Ishapur, and in the Nilgiris have rendered the Army self-supporting in material of war.

Everyone in India comes in contact with the Army and has something to say about it. Anglo-Indian opinion rarely welcomes change, recognizing that, no matter how necessary and salutary change may be, it is seldom free from danger in the hitherto conservative East. The seven years which Lord Kitchener passed in India were marked by great changes, which gave rise to many contradictory opinions very strongly expressed. Time, which softens everything, has softened most of these asperities and has exposed the hollow character of many of the misrepresentations to which Lord Kitchener's projects gave rise.

It is recognized now that Lord Kitchener had no aim in view but that of military efficiency ; that he wisely decentralized much work that was formerly congested ; that he doubled the hitting power of the Army and made it available in a shorter time ; that he upset no cherished tradition that was worth cherishing ; and that he left the Indian Army stronger, better trained, better armed, better paid, and more contented than he found it.

These are great results of much moment to the Empire. They represent the Indian complement of the work which Mr. Haldane has accomplished at home. Fortunate England to find two men of such rare ability and perseverance ! A Commander-in-Chief in India occupies a house for which a

Secretary for War provides the principal furniture. Work as he may, the Chief of the Army in India is wholly dependent, so far as his white troops are concerned, upon the prudence and good sense of the Secretary for War and his principal advisers. It has been largely owing to the wise direction of Army policy at home that the ranks of the British Army in India are full to overflowing, and that this vital element of the defence of India is in a happy condition of admired efficiency.

The public must hope, and has the right to insist, that the continuity of the work of these two great statesmen shall be rigorously maintained by those who may come after them.

CHAPTER XIII

NEW WARS FOR OLD *

I

THE SUBMARINE

SINCE the last great war came to an end in 1905, science has endowed strategy with new arms of such importance, and such eventual menace, that, although they have not altered the grand and eternal principles of strategy, they have so gravely altered the conduct of war, and of naval war in particular, that we are bound to rearrange and sort out our ideas afresh, and to prepare for war of a character wholly different from that which the majority of us, even professionals, have hitherto anticipated.

I think that the North Sea falls within the category of narrow waters which eventually must, by a process of evolution which is taking place under our eyes—that is to say, by the invention or development of the airship, the submarine, the torpedo, and the mine—become practically closed on the outbreak of war, and possibly throughout the war, to the operations of sea-going fleets and cruisers. I think that the great ships to which we devote so much money every year—though they have been, are, and may for a few years more be necessary—will within a limited period of time become useless for most operations of which the North Sea and the Channel will be the theatre. I think that these conclusions, provided that I can, however imperfectly, show cause for them, will represent a new situation for the Navy, the Army, and Commerce, and that the public, if it wishes to avoid a panic, must be made aware of these new conditions, and must be prepared for them.

* By kind permission of Mr. William Blackwood.

I will first endeavour to show cause why neither Dreadnoughts, pre-Dreadnoughts, nor super-Dreadnoughts will, a few years hence, have any place in a naval war waged in such narrow waters as those of the North Sea. I am not going to discuss the idea which presided over the armour and armament of these monsters. I wonder why they sacrifice buoyancy, offensive power, coal capacity, and speed to the pleasure of carrying armour which can be pierced by the projectiles of the guns of the ships which they are built to fight ; and I wonder why, as we have guns which can pierce the armour of the ships of our rivals, we should cast about for a heavier gun which will pierce armour of a greater thickness than any ship carries.

But these are naval mysteries which do not interest me very much. The real point lies elsewhere. The super-Dreadnought costs from two to two and a half millions sterling, carries a thousand men, and can be sunk by a torpedo fired from an invisible submarine, costing perhaps £60,000 to £80,000, at 7,000 yards range. No naval constructor has yet succeeded in designing a ship which can retain its buoyancy after receiving the shock of the explosion of a modern torpedo. The Germans have added 2,000 tons to the displacement of their latest ships in the hope that they will have effected this object, but I do not suppose that their constructors will have solved a problem which has baffled ours.

The modern torpedo is a weapon of which the full powers, and the full significance, have not yet been displayed in war. The Japanese torpedo in the last war was the 11-inch type, with 100 lb. of wet gun-cotton in the war-head. Great though the material and moral effect of the initial surprise at Port Arthur was, the Japanese torpedo craft suffered from tactical and technical disadvantages which prevented them throughout the war from gaining much more than partial successes. The war-heads of the Japanese torpedoes were so built that the centres of gravity of the charges were at some distance from a ship's side when exploded. The range was often too great. Leaks in the net-cutter glands

sometimes drowned the explosives. The use of the gyroscope was not appreciated. In several instances torpedoes were frozen in the tubes and adjustments insufficiently supervised. The absence of any reserve of destroyers prevented the Japanese command from taking full war risks, while there was, I believe, inadequate control of flotillas acting nominally in co-operation with fleets. Lastly, there were the disadvantages inherent in all destroyer action at the time—namely, exposure to gun-fire, noise of engines, emission of smoke, flame, and sparks from funnels, and the bow wave which a searchlight so readily shows up at night.

The improvement of the torpedo and the development of submersibles and submarines have already completely changed the position of affairs since the last war. We went on to the 18-inch torpedo, with a range of 4,000 yards and a speed of thirty-six knots for 1,000 yards, and then to the 21-inch torpedo, weighing nearly a ton, with a range of over 7,000 yards and a speed of forty knots. Improvements in the controlling mechanism have endowed this torpedo with astonishing accuracy, while the charge of gun-cotton carried in the head is almost treble the Japanese figure, and can be depended on to detonate at all likely angles on hitting a ship. Thus we have already arrived at a weapon which can compete with the gun at medium if not long fighting ranges, and can deliver a far more deadly blow. By no means is this the last word of the torpedo, and we must expect the future to give us and our enemies a weapon of even greater powers.

Even if there were nothing but the destroyer to receive this weapon for its main armament, the position of battleship and cruiser would be gravely shaken by this new development, but, combined with the submarine, the new torpedo becomes a weapon of deadly menace; while the submarine herself—worst of all for battleship and cruiser—has not yet found her naval destroyer, nor is open, except accidentally and by chance, to any known form of attack by ships in fair and normal fighting circumstances. The latest type of submarine has a surface speed of fifteen knots, which is certain to increase year by year, a displacement of 400 to

800 tons, and a range of 2,500 miles. The speed submerged remains at present about ten knots. The large addition of electric storage necessary to increase the speed of submarines under water entails so much more weight that it is out of proportion to the gain of speed ; but motive power on the surface can easily be increased, and doubtless will be year by year until the submarine is able to do much more than all the destroyers can do now.

There are already some 600 British and German torpedo craft of all denominations and all values, including submarines, in existence, and I suppose that the number of these craft, British and German, will increase at the rate of some fifty a year. I think that Germany realizes the value of the submarine, and will soon astonish us by her productive capacity in this type.* When shipyards are adequately equipped, some thirty submarines can be built for the price of a super-Dreadnought, and in less than half the time. Germany has devoted, I believe, some thirty-seven million marks to the construction of submarines up to the present, and, as each boat costs about a million and a half marks, there must be a considerable number completing. The Dilke return declares that the number is uncertain, but this does not imply that there is any real uncertainty on the subject at the Admiralty.

We have, it is true, a long advance, and probably a somewhat better type, as we have had more experience ; but we are no further advanced than we were a few years ago in the discovery of naval means for attacking submarines, which, for their part, are constantly improving their range, armament, efficiency, and safety. Considering, further, the immense development of mine warfare, especially of an offensive character, of late years, and the probability that even submarines will be used to lay lines of mines, there will very soon be no place for anything but the airship, the torpedo, and the mine in naval operations in the North Sea.

* It will come as a surprise to many to learn that, in all probability, the German Navy will include no fewer than thirty submarines by the summer or autumn of 1912.—*Naval and Military Record*, April 13, 1911.

It is time for us to recognize that the North Sea, in time of war, will very soon be, if it is not now, no place for a sea-going fleet. Swarms of destroyers and submarines, and every year more of the latter, will infest the sea, and the existence of every great ship venturing to cruise in the area controlled by these pests, which are almost unassailable by naval means, will be most precarious. Our great and costly battleships and cruisers must be stowed away safely in some distant, safe and secluded anchorage—Scapa Flow and Portsmouth to-day, Berehaven and Lough Swilly perhaps to-morrow. The North Sea in time of war will be a desert of waters, insecure to both sides, open to neither, commanded by none. Britannia may rule the waves, but who will rule above them and below? I pass on with the reflection that whatever means Germany may possess for attacking submarines effectually, we possess none.

There is an idea entertained, I do not say by the Admiralty, but by some writers on naval matters and by the public, that we shall once more make the five-fathom line off the enemy's coast our frontier, and that our Navy, in one disposition or another, will directly interpose between the German and the British coasts. There has been much loose talk of operations on the German coasts, of raids into German territory, and of the seizure of German islands, one of which, in consequence, has been hastily fortified. I have endeavoured to demonstrate elsewhere * that all this strategy, resurrected from the dead past, and based upon wholly unjustifiable conclusions from certain episodes of the Seven Years War, is as dead as Queen Anne. Nothing is impossible in war, nor can any operation be ruled out *a priori*, because circumstances govern action. But our aim in war is to succeed, and I have never seen the proof of how, by wasting our Army and by involving the Navy in the expensive process of scratching at the German coasts, we can exercise any pressure worth talking about, or expedite by an hour the conclusion either of a general war, or of a maritime

* See "Statecraft and Strategy," republished from *The Times* in *The Foundations of Reform*, chapter X.

war in which we and Germany are alone involved. All that we do by this strategy is to enable Germany to wage war in the most favourable conditions for the success of her arms.

In the old days we were compelled to watch the ports of France and Spain because, unless we did so, the fleets of those countries were able to put to sea to unite, and to attack our trade and our possessions where they pleased. It is neither necessary nor advisable to follow this practice against Germany, because geographical conditions place her in a very unfavourable situation against us, and it is open to us to make the North Sea a *mare clausum* in war, both to German sea-going fleets and to German merchant vessels. Why should we incur all the risks and losses involved in coastal warfare and conjoint operations on the German shores of the North Sea and the Baltic, without any hope of adequate return, when by stationing our main fleets, for example, at Scapa Flow and the Straits of Dover, we can exercise a more effective pressure, incur less risks, and compel the Germans, if they desire to free themselves from our potent strategic embrace, to cross the North Sea and challenge us at home ?

It is seven years since I ventured to point out in the pages of *Maga* * the advantages which we might derive from the utilization of the Orkney Islands and the control of the water area extending thence past the Shetland Islands to Norway. I was very glad to notice the tardy discovery of Scapa Flow a little while ago, and I believe that it is at present the best jumping-off place for our main fleet. Moreover, these waters are full of unpleasant surprises for navigators who do not know them. The swilkies of Stroma and Swona, Lothar Reef, the bore of Duncansby in a south-easterly gale, the race of the Merry Men of Mey off Torness in a westerly swell, and certain little peculiarities of the currents, make the neighbourhood of the Pentland Firth about as uncomfortable water for strange submarines as anyone could wish.

We have a sort of half-digested idea that because we "blockaded" the enemy's ports in old days we ought to do

* "Imperial Strategy": by a Staff Officer. *Maga*, May 1903.

so again. Some impulsive people get purple in the face when they hear of any strategy but that of Duncan at Camperdown. They only ask to lie alongside the enemy, and will let strategy go hang. But, after all, it is not possible by naval action to extract a hostile fleet from its harbour, like an oyster from its shell, if it does not propose to come out ; while, as for blockading, in its popular interpretation, Nelson's principle was absolutely the reverse, as he has left on record in the plainest terms. Not even the watches off Brest, Toulon, and Cadiz are now very simple operations. The mine, the improved torpedo, the submarine, the destroyer, the airship, wireless telegraphy, and long-ranging coastal ordnance, have revolutionized the conditions of operations off an enemy's coast, and strategy, whether it likes it or not, has to take count of a new situation.

I think that our battle fleets will have to keep out of harm's way and leave the flotillas to carry on the war. Where our main fleet or fleets should be anchored ; when they should shift their positions ; and at what moment they should pass to the attack, are secrets of the higher command, and the higher command, when it is competent, keeps these secrets locked up in its own breast. It will do so with the greater facility in the case under notice, because our main fleets are not likely to put to sea until the enemy is afoot, and because our action must be dependent upon that of the enemy.

Now if, for the sake of argument, it will be conceded that practically the whole of the East Coast of England and Scotland will in course of time, if not now, be directly defended at sea by the flotillas, and practically by the flotillas alone, it follows that these must be numerous, and must possess many bases where they can be repaired in security. Dirigibles, when we possess them, must have sheds, the destroyers must have well-defended ports where their crews can rest from a most fatiguing service, and submarines must have stations where their activities can be renewed. We have only three submarine stations on our East Coast at present, including the new station at Dundee.

Parent ships and repairing vessels, not to speak of floating docks, give the Admiralty much scope in making their dispositions, but it would be more satisfactory were the submarine stations much more numerous. At each station there should be storage for gasoline and petroleum, charging stations for electric batteries and for air, and a slipway to enable vessels to be cleaned and tanks overhauled. We cannot be satisfied until the number of these stations is increased, and until large flotillas of destroyers and submarines are permanently attached to them. An initial defensive deployment does not preclude, and may render more easy, offensive war.

Now, assuming that this argument is not knocked into a cocked hat by some practical seaman, as I hope it may be, I wish to outline the consequences which appear to follow for the interests of Commerce from the general strategic conception which I have indicated. It is possible, though not certain, that we may be able to give relative protection to the up-Channel trade bound for the Port of London, but as the enemy will make determined efforts to harass and attack this trade, and as trade itself is very sensitive, we must anticipate that a part of it—more or less according to our success or failure in discovering a way to attack hostile submarines—will be diverted to our southern and western English ports. As some ten millions of people are fed daily through the mouth of the Thames, and as the greater part of the fuel and raw material required by the capital passes through the same mouth, the resulting situation will be serious. Our other ports and railways are little prepared, at short notice, to convert themselves from veins into arteries, and I think that there will be, at the capital, a great rise in the price of all food-stuffs and fuel, great sufferings among rich and poor alike, and not improbably serious riots.

Along the rest of the East Coast of England and Scotland, trade by way of the sea will probably be almost suspended until the submarine menace is disposed of. The limits of the activity of hostile submarines are dependent on their range, which is governed by their fuel capacity. A good modern

submarine, with a range of 2,500 miles, cannot be allowed a less radius of action than 1,000 miles, and every port within that distance of Heligoland, Emden, or the Elbe mouth must be considered open to the submarine menace when Germany completes her submarine flotillas. Oversea trade will seek other ports, and the products of districts which use East Coast ports will be despatched to their markets by rail. These consequences are likely to follow whether we concentrate our naval forces off the German coasts, as Colonel von Bieberstein, in the *Neue Militärische Blätter*, declares we must, or whether we do not. Nothing that we can effect by naval means can, with any certainty, prevent German submarines from putting to sea when they please, and from appearing off our coasts at their own sweet will.

I think that public opinion ought to be prepared, and so ought the Army and the merchants of England and Scotland, for developments at sea of the character which I have roughly sketched. We ought not to think, in case our Navy does not take post off the German coasts or fails to bring the German fleets to action immediately, that we are not playing the correct game, which is the strangulation of German sea-borne trade by the intelligent use of our Navy and of our commanding geographical position. We ought to be able to make fairly sure of success in this strategy, so far as the particular object in view is concerned, unless or until the German Navy streams proudly out to face the ordeal of battle, when the result will rest on the knees of the gods.

But this classic encounter may be denied to us, and our particular object at present must be to devise means, if we can, to meet the submarine menace of the future. We might adapt to naval use those poaching expedients, the "cross-line" and the "otter," while here and there chains and nets may upset the stability of the submarine, hydroplanes notwithstanding. But I doubt whether strictly naval means will ever be discovered for the effectual combating of the submarine. The range of vision under water through the scuttle of the conning tower of a submarine, and with the sun shining, is only ten yards at a depth of fifteen feet, so that

the pursuit of the submarine under water by faster craft of her own type does not hold out much chance of success. A destroyer may sink by fire or run down a submarine which is caught upon the surface, but this event is only likely to happen when the submarine is already blinded or disabled, whether by the loss of her periscope or otherwise. The ability of a submarine to proceed under water for several hours in any direction without coming to the surface makes it most unlikely that a flotilla, even if its presence be detected, can be followed up and disposed of by naval means.

Therefore, while I think that the main object of our strategy against Germany may conceivably be achieved, I am much less confident of success in the war of the flotillas. If, for example, Germany discovers or has discovered the means for effectually attacking submarines, and if we have not, it is possible that Germany, when she has constructed the submarines upon which she seems resolutely bent, may dominate the North Sea by their means, and put us to the dilemma either of allowing her army of invasion to land, or of attacking it—maybe a convoy of dummy transports—and of thus exposing our battle fleets to the blows of German submarines which we may have no certain means of destroying. It will not be altogether a satisfactory end to a war if we ruin, indeed, German sea-borne trade, but end with the Pomeranian Grenadier in Palace Yard and the Altona Corps at Arthur's Seat.

We cannot doubt that, provided Germany does not open the ball with a naval surprise followed by invasion, she will make ready the troops destined for invasion, and will keep them ready to reap the fruits of any success that fortune may send her at sea. We cannot hope to attack Germany on land without allies, because an oversea attack upon an armed nation is an absurdity. But Germany can hope to attack us—and herein lies the profound difference between the military position of the two countries in war—if she secures the local control of maritime communications for a limited period, more properly to be measured by hours than by days.

It is very difficult to make people think in anything but

terms of Dreadnoughts. I am not in the least attacking the Dreadnought policy. I believe that the Dreadnought was the natural evolution from the type which immediately preceded her, and that without our Dreadnought ships we should be now, and for some years to come, very insecure. But I think that as soon as the German submarine flotilla is fairly complete, there will be no place for any great ship in the North Sea. A dash by a fleet or a convoy of transports across an area infested by hostile submarines may be practicable if losses are accepted philosophically, but cruising by a fleet in such an area will probably prove impracticable.

Very probably this opinion will be strongly denied. Many great firms have laid down an immense and expensive plant for the construction of these monsters, and will be sure to use all the literary and other talent at their disposal to maintain the present policy of construction even when the German submarines are ready. I do not think that anything short of war experience will bring home to us the new conditions. It is also certain that it must be a perfectly hateful idea to senior officers of the Navy that a wretched little submarine should dominate the waters in which a Dreadnought proudly sails. Yet, what other conclusion is possible? The submarine can observe, attack, and sink the Dreadnought ship while she can neither observe, nor attack, nor yet sink, except by accident, the submarine. It will be David and Goliath over again, with this difference, that instead of the little pebble from the brook, the submarine will send 300 lb. of gun-cotton into the vitals of her foe.

I am, therefore, far more concerned to see a greater development of the flotillas than I am to see much more money expended upon a type which, like Roland's mare, has all merits imaginable, but is unfortunately dead. Most of all do I hope to see means discovered for attacking submarines effectually, and in a second article I shall now give some additional reasons for my belief that a naval war in the North Sea presents problems to which neither the last great war in the Far East, nor any war recorded by history, affords any guidance at all.

II

THE AIRSHIP

When M. Blériot landed at Dover he opened a new chapter in the military history of the British Isles.

Our Navy declares—and I hope with reason—that it is able to destroy any and every enemy who approaches these islands of ours by sea. But our Navy has never pretended, and obviously cannot pretend, to exercise any effective control by strictly naval means over a foe who arrives in this country by any alternative route, whether above the sea or below it.

The Government is sometimes blamed for not having taken the lead in the fascinating science of aerial navigation, and for allowing us to remain several years behind France and Germany in the design and utilization of airships of all kinds. There are some grounds for these complaints, but it was certainly not in our true interests to take the lead in promoting a science which is bound, though to what extent is a matter of opinion, to affect the predominant position which we have hitherto held at sea.

Unfortunately, we have passed beyond this stage. Practical airships have been constructed. Dirigibles and aeroplanes are in existence, and have already covered long distances, at great speed, and with safety. Every year, not to say every month, progress is marked. With us or without us, these new auxiliaries of fleets and armies will continue to improve; and all that remains for us to do is to take measures to meet this new menace, if it is a menace, and to see that we are as well provided as our neighbours with these extremely unwelcome and quite novel arms.

I shall endeavour in this article, without dwelling unduly on technical details, to state what airships can do, what they may be expected to achieve in the immediate future, what changes in methods of war the introduction of this new factor is likely to bring about, and what guidance for our own conduct this investigation seems to suggest. Considering

that practical aerostation is not much older than the century, and that the progress made in a few short years has been so astonishing, I think that we should be imprudent to maintain too conservative an attitude, and to refuse to the new science the hope of great progress hereafter. Thus, while we must distinguish between what airships can do now and what they may be expected to do, we must allow a wide margin of safety for inventive talent, for the awakened interest of governments, and for the relentless march of all-conquering human ingenuity.

There is a great variety in the type of airship in existence and projected. Military interest for the moment is confined to two—namely, the rigid, semi-rigid, or non-rigid dirigible, and the aeroplane, whether monoplane, biplane, or other. The best known of the rigid-frame dirigibles is the Zeppelin. The improved Zeppelin can theoretically cover 1,140 miles, and has already covered 800 miles, without descending. She has a speed of a little over thirty miles an hour on a calm day, and has risen to a height of 5,600 feet. She can carry fifteen passengers and a large supply of fuel, stores, and explosives.

The safety of this type—upon which the dirigible now building at Barrow will, we hope, be an improvement—is secured by distributing lifting power between seventeen separate balloons enclosed between partitions. Height control is derived from stabilizing and balancing surfaces. The soaring power of the Zeppelin, thanks to her elevators, is said to be great without discharge of ballast. In the first Zeppelin an aluminium alloy known as wolframinium was used for rings, stays, and braces: the compartments contained 351,150 cubic feet of hydrogen, giving a lift of eleven tons. The reconstructed Zeppelin III, now known as Zeppelin VI, is said to have three motors which develop 350 h.p. In this airship, and in the Barrow ship, another aluminium alloy called duralumin is employed. The Zeppelin type has certain notorious disadvantages which have been demonstrated by the destruction of two of the kind by the elements. But, given proper provision for shelter or anchorage when descending to the ground, it is at present

the most formidable, militarily speaking, of existing types of airships, because of its wide range, fair speed, and good carrying capacity.

It is, however, too early to decide whether this type, the semi-rigid Parseval, or the non-rigid Gross and her French peers, will ultimately be preferred for military purposes. The German Parseval III has motors of 200 h.p. and a speed of thirty-two and a half miles an hour. The Gross II has a capacity of 270,000 cubic feet. Her two motors, driving two propellers, give a speed of thirty-three and three-quarter miles an hour, which will probably be exceeded by the Gross III, which has double the power, though this does not mean double the speed. The French non-rigid or so-called "*souple*" types of dirigibles are smaller than the German, and of less power. The Ville de Nancy is 180 feet long, 33 feet broad, and has a capacity of 180,000 cubic feet. The Ville de Paris can carry six persons and about 1,000 lb. of ballast or explosives, while she has a mean speed in a calm of about twenty-five miles an hour. The non-rigid airship has not at present the range nor the carrying capacity of the rigid type, but it can be deflated, packed up, sent anywhere by rail, and then used in the manner that the Gross II was used at the German manœuvres last year. We must anticipate very interesting results from these airships before long, and we must bear in mind that the non-rigid type is handy, and may yet become a dangerous rival to the Zeppelin. Our little experimental Army airship the Beta, with her 35 h.p. and low speed, cuts a very sorry figure when compared with these foreign squadrons of the air.*

The range of the aeroplane is in principle dependent on fuel supply, which in practice allows at present a flight of about 150 miles at the rate of fifty miles an hour without descending.† The world's record for an aeroplane flight with two passengers is at present two hours and fifty-one minutes. As the pilot of an aeroplane is almost wholly occu-

* Nevertheless, the Beta was admirably handled and performed excellent service during our Army manœuvres of 1910.

† These results have now been greatly exceeded.

pied with navigating his craft, an aeroplane which cannot take a second passenger to make observations is of little use for military purposes. The aeroplane has risen to a height of 4,146 feet. If its motor fails it must come down, though not necessarily to grief. Its high speed, simplicity, cheapness, portability, comparative invulnerability to fire, and power to ascend and descend with ease, are in its favour, but it cannot remain motionless in the air, its power in attack is as yet undeveloped, and it is adapted for the moment only to short flights.

To what extent are improvements likely to take place in the immediate future? Improvements in the tensile strength of aluminium alloys, and in the trustworthiness and power of motors, will certainly decrease weights and increase the speed of dirigibles, perhaps up to forty miles an hour, and increase the range to 1,500 miles or more for the rigid type. If reserve buoyancy can be supplied by compressed gas, the range will be greatly extended, while the same result will also be obtained by more scientific use of plane surfaces. Bulk is sure to remain great, and the extreme limits have probably not yet been reached. Size means gain in lifting power over areas, for the first cubes as the second squares. The temptation is therefore to build big, but other factors enter into the calculation as size increases and end by imposing limits to size. There is no immediate probability that any dirigible will be able to make headway against strong winds, but on calm days and in moderate winds the arrival of German dirigibles above some of our seaports and a part of our territory must be anticipated in time of war.

There is some loss of buoyancy in navigating above the sea owing to the condensing of moist air on an airship, but specially designed envelopes will doubtless overcome this difficulty. It is said that a fabric has been made which, in the dampest atmosphere, does not increase weight more than a third of an ounce to the square yard.

The greatest difficulty not yet wholly overcome is that of navigating the air with certainty in any given direction, especially over the sea, when there is no *point de repère* for

observers aloft. It is probable that the gyro-compass, which has been successfully introduced into the German Navy, will prove suitable for airship work. A real difficulty to the airman is the danger that, even if an airship is apparently heading in the required direction at full speed, the movement of the air may all the time be causing a lateral or angular drift. An airship sextant, capable of rapid manipulation, is required to enable the airman to determine and maintain a course against lateral drift due to the wind. On the other hand, the power possessed by the airship of remaining at the same altitude where air currents are fairly constant is favourable to equable flight. With his German gyro-compass, with an accurate chronometer for determining longitude, with wind vanes on ball mountings to show leeway, and with anemometers connected with speed and revolution-counting indicators to record distance travelled, the airman is already pretty well equipped for locomotion in a required direction, even at sea, and such difficulties as still remain to be overcome do not appear great by the side of others which have already been surmounted. As for the fog so prevalent in the North Sea, M. de Lesseps showed us only the other day that even the aeroplane can rise above the banks and be steered by the sun.

The dirigible is the best existing type of airship for purposes of strategical reconnaissance and attack. Observers on the deck of a dirigible can see ships at a distance of thirty miles in fair weather. On land, isolated men can be observed from a height of 2,000 feet, horses and small groups of men from a height of 3,000 feet, while from a height of 4,000 feet the Patrie observed the smallest movements of formed bodies of troops at the Satory camp and obtained very clear telephotographs of them. It is difficult to exaggerate the value of the dirigible for purposes of strategical reconnaissance, and as wireless telegraphy has been adapted to use by airships there cannot be much doubt that in favouring weather the best watch in the air will secure the advantage of prompt and accurate information of the movements of fleets and flotillas at sea and of masses on land.

It is possible for observers on airships to detect ships at sea from positions far beyond the reach of guns, and to escape destruction by artillery on land, thanks to speed, height above the ground, and the difficulty of ranging. It will not be very convenient to mount guns on airships, but specially designed guns will probably become necessary for use against other airships, and may be fired by compressed air. The projectiles of airship guns may probably give out a jet of flame and a smoke "tracer" on discharge, but the Germans possess a sensitive fuse which is said to act upon contact with even such light fabrics as envelopes of airships. Whether some form of unflammable gas, steam, or ammonia can be discovered or adapted to the use of dirigibles in order to overcome the dangers arising from inflammable hydrogen gas is a question that remains open. On the whole, helium, which is almost as light as hydrogen and not inflammable, appears to be the best substitute for hydrogen at present known, but very little isolated helium as yet exists.

Contrivances for dropping or firing explosives upon ships, troops, and works below will form the main offensive armament of the airship, which will also strive to play the part of the hawk to the heron of the rival airship. An airship which can soar higher than her foe and travel faster has this foe at her mercy. Guns for repelling airship attack on sea or land will rely on flame-fire or sensitive fuses. On rare occasions shrapnel may be effective if bullets of a special design are introduced into the shell.

An object moving through the air at a great height, not necessarily on a horizontal plane, at an unknown range, and at a speed of twenty-five to forty miles an hour, is not easy to hit. The rigidity of the trajectory, admitted for the construction and use of sights for horizontal fire, is no longer true when firing into the air. Rifle-fire against an airship is practically unaimed fire unless special sights are introduced. The perforation of gas envelopes by small-calibre bullets has, moreover, been proved by French and German experiments to have little effect in reducing buoyancy. The carriages of

field-guns, again, do not as a rule permit of fire at angles of elevation greater than 16° or 20° unless the trail is buried in the ground. At a height of 3,000 to 4,000 feet the airship will practically have nothing to fear from the fire of these weapons. Howitzers and some types of heavy artillery will theoretically be more effective, but we should be sanguine to suppose that the fire of any cumbrous cannon will be anything but most disappointing against such swiftly moving marks as modern airships. Effective fire against airships, whether from ships or from land, can only be expected from special guns using special projectiles. The Germans realized this fact at a very early date, and are well ahead of other Powers with their 7.5-c. and 10.5-c. anti-airship guns, which have an extreme vertical range of 6,800 and 12,400 yards respectively. Messrs. Vickers have designed a 3-pr. gun for high angle fire, but, thanks to the very thorough experiments at Dantzig and elsewhere, Germany is as far ahead of us in anti-airship artillery as she is in airships themselves.

While airships may use special artillery for attacking their kind, their main offensive menace will rest with the projectiles or explosives fired or dropped upon the mark below. It is true that we have signed and ratified an international declaration which prohibits "the discharge of projectiles and explosives from balloons, or by other new methods of a similar nature," but Germany is not a party to this declaration, so we are forced to ignore it. The velocity acquired by bombs dropped from a great height is considerable, and up to a certain point increases with the height. It is true that explosives are much less harmful against certain targets, for instance a bomb-proof, when they are not enclosed in a strong and heavy shell, but in the future contest between the airship bomb and the armoured deck the bomb will probably win in the end. At present spherical bombs to the number of thirty, with thin walls, and each containing 44 lb. of explosive substance, can be carried by an airship of the Patrie type. Very much more can be carried by the larger Zeppelins. The transport and the projection at one

discharge of a ton of explosive substance are not beyond the reach of attainment, and this amount will be much more than enough to wreck any warship now afloat. It is commonly supposed that the sudden loss of weight caused by the discharge of projectiles will compromise the stability of airships. French experiments appear to show that this danger has been exaggerated, and it seems to be probable that loss of ballast can be compensated by a proper arrangement of escape valves.

M. Juchmès, the pilot of the *Lebaudy*, proved long ago that an airship can remain poised and practically immobilized in the air even in a wind. Very fair practice has already been made in dropping bombs on selected marks, and the conclusion at which the French appear to have arrived is that 50 per cent of projectiles dropped from a height of 4,500 feet can be made to fall within a square with sides of twenty-five yards. If the airship is handled skilfully, says the German Major Moedebeck in his *Pocket Book of Aeronautics*, the object aimed at can be hit very exactly. The *Punch* artist was a little behind the times when he depicted the disappointment of the foreign airmen who had "missed London." When more scientific instruments are devised, the 20-foot-broad funnels of warships will be the airman's bull's-eyes. Already nothing prevents the effective offensive use of airships in war, within their present limits of range, and in favourable weather, which after all occasionally occurs, even in Scotland. The mean hourly wind velocity, judging by the *Challenger* observations, is only seventeen miles at sea, while on land it is only twelve and a half miles, but increases in higher altitudes. Airships have to contend, over our islands, with a higher average velocity of wind than is found in France or Germany. But we must expect every year to hear of dirigibles with greater range, higher speed, and better carrying capacity, which in their turn will increase the military results which may be expected from these types in their three main duties—namely, communication, reconnaissance, and attack.

Progress in the military use of aeroplanes will chiefly take

the form of increased range and speed, and perhaps of increased size. The limit of range cannot be calculated with any precision, but may extend to 500 or even 1,000 miles before very long, while enthusiasts expect a speed of 200 miles an hour, and consequently hope to combat the highest winds, which are not much over 100 miles an hour. The Gnome rotary engine has lately effected a marked improvement in aeroplane flight, and as better and lighter motors are placed on the market there is sure to be constant progress, while safety may be increased by duplicate engines and propelling gear. The fact that a skilful pilot of an aeroplane will be able to face winds which will keep dirigibles in their harbours will always give the aeroplane a place in the aerial forces of every nation, while for purposes of tactical reconnaissance, both on land and sea, the aeroplane promises to be invaluable. It will not easily be open to attack by the slower dirigible. It requires no expensive, complicated, and ponderous plant. It is much less exposed to the buffets of the wind when at rest. It may turn out to be the destroyer of the air, and in any case it is sure to have its use in war. It would be very imprudent for us to tie ourselves to any particular type of airship for naval and military purposes at this moment. We must excel in each type and remain constantly alert to what the foreigner is doing.

Scepticism respecting the utility of airships in war is not an attitude that can be justified any longer. We must all in the end yield to evidence and to proofs of tangible achievements. The questions then arise how airships are likely to be employed in a future war, how they can best be met, and what measures it behoves us to take. In case of war between England and Germany, the object of the latter will obviously be—and quite rightly—to use an arm which we do not yet possess in such a manner that she may obtain early and accurate information of our naval dispositions and movements, and at the same time cause us the *maximum* amount of moral and material damage.

In the discussion of an interesting paper read by Lord

Montagu of Beaulieu before the National Defence Association last year, allusion was made to the probability of airship attack upon the nerve centres of London, such as the General Post Office, the Telephone Exchanges, the Bank of England, the Royal Palaces, the Railway Termini, and so on. Nearly all the speakers thought that such attacks were admissible and probable. It is true, and the fact may prove most interesting in its consequences, that the *gobe-mouche* and the "mafficker" may hereafter come within sight of the enemy, and for the first time realize his existence and their danger. But my view is that great towns like London and Edinburgh are to some extent protected against aerial bombardments by the inherent uselessness and inexpediency of such measures even from the German point of view. Great Powers like England and Germany do not make war on women and peaceful citizens. I do not think that it would profit the cause of Germany in the least to bombard London or Edinburgh from the air. Such an act would only infuriate our people, and make them ready for every sacrifice. If we heard that a Royal or a plebeian nursery, a crowd of peaceful clerks, or bevvies of young women in the Telephone Exchanges—exasperating as they sometimes are—had suddenly been swept into eternity, the war would become one of extermination. Humanity aside, I do not think that it would pay Germany to provoke a war of that character with the British Empire. We shall be under the disagreeable necessity, in case of war with Germany, of temporarily incarcerating all German citizens in this country of a military age—that is to say, between the ages of seventeen and forty-five. There is such a thing as the stern law of reprisals, and I hope that no enemy may ever impose it upon us.

Nor do I think that airships are ever likely to be used for the transport of troops for the invasion of our islands. So far as our experience goes, there seems to be no likelihood that the men, guns, ammunition, and stores, to say nothing of wagons and horses, required by an army destined for the invasion of the British Isles, will ever pass by way of the air.

But even if these two forms of attack be excluded, there remains, unfortunately, a sufficiently large sphere of activity for the airship to cause us much anxiety. First of all, reconnaissance. In favourable weather the German airships will begin their watch at sea during the period of tension, and they may be able to keep under frequent observation any ships of ours which enter the decisive maritime area within the Channel and the North Sea. The reports by wireless from the airships will permit the German naval forces to operate against any weaker detachments of ours within striking distance, and should render any attempt on our part to watch closely the German coast and ports a hazardous proceeding. It is certainly true that the weather conditions over the British Isles are frequently very unfavourable for airship work, and that *afflavit Deus* may yet be struck upon another British medal. But we must also suppose that a Power which expects important results from airships will select a moment that is favourable for their activity and not the reverse.

I pass from the *rôle* of reconnaissance to that of attack. We must reckon with the fact that in favourable weather the dirigible soon will, if it cannot already, outstrip the fastest warship afloat. So long as the ship has no armament which will keep the airship at a respectful distance—and this is the case with us at present—there is no reason why the latter should not rain down projectiles on the deck and into the funnels of the ship until the supply of explosives is exhausted. So long as our warships are without this special armament they remain exposed to this form of attack, the future consequences of which will vary from year to year according to the forms which the projectiles of the hostile airship will hereafter take, the character of the contrivance for dropping or firing them, and the future types of armoured decks or steel pent-houses to resist these new attacks, if they can be resisted. As the airships increase in numbers and efficiency we must expect to see groups of them seek out our fleets at their anchorages and renew their depredations on a larger scale.

By hovering over our naval ports and establishments dirigibles can hope to play havoc with ships within the port, and with those completing for sea, building, or repairing. Cordite factories are sure to invite the particular attentions of the enemy. Flotilla bases where destroyers and submarines may be found will offer a specially attractive bait, for these light craft, secured as they often are in long lines near the quay, form a large and vulnerable target. The points open to attacks of this nature will constantly be increased as the range of hostile airships extends. Such attacks will be particularly dangerous at night when there is a moon, for it has been proved that it is very difficult to distinguish an airship by night, while the outlines of ships in the water can be seen plainly from above.

Everyone who has watched fish from a bridge knows that it is possible to see a considerable distance into water directly below. Observers in airships will often be able to detect submarines and mines, to drop marks over the latter to guide mine-sweeping craft, and to attack submarines when these are either on the surface or near enough to the surface to use their periscopes. Dirigibles can safely approach within close range of submarines and make good practice with bombs or specially designed projectiles for use against these pests. The airship seems destined to play the part of the gull to the submarine fish, and offers at present the best hope for mitigating if not of ending the severe strain imposed upon a navy by the submarine menace. It is partly because Germany has such a large number of airships ready, while we have almost none, that I think she must hope to beat us in flotilla war. The airship has the faculty of approaching its objective, whether on sea or on land, rapidly and noiselessly. A few minutes after it is first observed it will be able to act. Nothing but other airships or special guns can check or delay its attack. It has all the moral force which attaches to novelty in war.

We cannot speak of the command of the air in the sense that we understand that of the sea. The command of the air, in its literal sense, seems destined to remain in the

temple of the winds. Nevertheless, superiority in power to wage war in the air has become an imperative obligation for the State which desires to command at sea, and it is not improbable that in the near future the command of narrow waters may be decided in the air. Superiority in the air will enable a Power to act with knowledge against an enemy more or less in the dark. It will, in favourable weather and narrow waters, discount largely superiority at sea. It will allow attacks to be made on hostile ships at sea and in port. By it alone, failing military action ashore, can a hostile fleet which takes refuge in defended harbours within airship range be attacked and perhaps destroyed. By it alone can the submarine menace be met and perhaps discounted.

If we reflect upon our preparations for figuring in these aerial combats, we shall probably agree that the creation of an Advisory Committee under Lord Rayleigh was a wise measure, for it is in experiment and research that we are so greatly behindhand. But we took another step which can less easily be defended, namely, the separation of our future airmen into two corps, one naval and the other military. The idea was that the rigid-frame dirigible was alone suited to the naval service, and other types of airships only to war on land. But is it quite so clear that the Army has not just as much need for distant reconnaissance as the Navy? and is it so certain that semi-rigid and non-rigid dirigibles and aeroplanes have no useful functions in a naval war? Many hard-headed people believe that the aeroplane will, without using her motors, eventually emulate the long-continued soaring flight of great birds. I think that we shall see parent ships for aeroplanes before long—very fast craft, with decks organized exclusively for launching aeroplanes, and with supplies of fuel, and all facilities for picking up aeroplanes on their return from scouting trips. In my idea, the aeroplane will impose itself upon the Navy.

I think that we are on the wrong tack in maintaining service distinctions in the domain of acrostation. The corps should be a single family, with a single aim, namely, the safe navigation of the air. We cannot count upon the same

unity of doctrine and effort in two corps as we can in one. The division which we have imposed is artificial and arbitrary, for the air knows no coasts nor ever will. All forms of aerial locomotion have much in common—for instance, the study of air currents, motors, steering, observation, signals, and so forth. A single corps, neither of Army nor of Navy, but one which will serve both without distinction and form the missing-link between the services, is the real need of the times, and into such corps we should take steps to attract as many practical airmen as possible. It is also obvious that a technical school for the complete instruction of apprentices should be created with the least possible delay.

Airship and anti-airship artillery must also be constructed. Every warship that floats should have an anti-airship armament, and as the surface destroyer is gradually ousted by her swift submersible sister of thirty knots on the surface and fifteen submerged, this type too will in the end be compelled in self-defence to adopt similar precautions. Anti-airship guns must be mounted at our naval ports and anchorages and round our factories of cordite and war material. It is necessary that the hostile airship should be attacked promptly and at extreme ranges directly she appears. Direct hits will be most difficult to obtain, but, as the mark will be large, and a single hit with flame-fire will mean the certain death of everyone on board a dirigible which trusts to hydrogen, there will be much inducement to keep out of range, at all events by day, and to avoid the poised position, which means a "sitter" for the guns below. In principle it is in the air that the airship must be fought, but the speed and rapid action of the airship make the defensive value of aerial forces very problematical. The stroke will probably be delivered in most instances long before the airships of the defence are ready for action, so that we shall with difficulty escape the obligation of arming our ships, yards, and factories of warlike materials with anti-airship guns. As for the night attacks of airships I am unable to suggest any means of combating them, and I am very doubtful whether

any such means will ever be found. The best preservative will be to get in our aerial blow upon the hostile navy first.

There is need for great vigilance and sustained effort. We are mainly dependent at present upon second-hand evidence of foreign experiments, and we shall never realize all that the airship can do in war until we have built and practically tested every form of airship of our own. If we can succeed, as I am convinced we can, given adequate financial provision, in building and in navigating a few score of serviceable dirigibles with a range of some 1,500 miles, and capable of discharging projectiles which will wreck a ship if they hit her deck, we shall gain the inestimable advantage of being able to attack, and perhaps destroy, hostile fleets in their ports where our Navy cannot at present get at them. We shall in any case possess the power which we lack of attacking hostile submarines, and thereby of gaining the upper hand in the war of small craft which may determine the fate not only of Navies but of Empires.

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The ideas which I have ventured to express in this chapter are no doubt—but no more than the new arms themselves—revolutionary and disturbing. They are without the sanction of war experience, because neither the submarine, nor the airship, nor the modern torpedo which is practically a new weapon, has yet figured in any war. But when new arms are introduced, and until we have the test of war to approve or condemn them, we are reduced to speculation concerning their future use. In the conflict of ideas arising from free discussion some sparks of light occasionally flash forth.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GENERAL STAFF UNDER NAPOLEON *

THE work of our General Staff in the field would display more finish if we took more trouble to study and profit by the experiences of others.

The General Staff under Napoleon is not a model susceptible of commonplace imitation, because we can revive neither dead lions nor dead epochs. But the work of this staff was, on the whole, more regular, businesslike, and efficient in the field than that of our staff is to-day, and it cannot be ignored in our contemplation of old models. It is true that the Napoleonic staff system as a whole was never exactly defined by decrees or regulations, and that some modern French writers have regretted this omission, and have attributed it to Napoleon's many other preoccupations. But if, as was the case, practice created its own theory, and resulted in the efficient and methodical conduct of staff business, it is not clear why Napoleon should have wasted his time in regulating what custom had already regularized.

The Napoleonic staff system can be ascertained only by studying the practice of Napoleon and his Marshals. This study offers an almost unlimited field of research. There are materials to our hand, not only in Napoleon's correspondence and commentaries, but in the memoirs of almost all the leading figures of the First Empire, as well as in those of the Emperor's secretaries, aides-de-camp, and orderly officers. The writings of Castellane, Lejeune, Ségur, Fézensac, Marbot, Saint-Chamans, and Chlapowski, are as indispensable for a correct understanding of the field service of

* From *The Times* of December 28, 1909, and January 15, 1910.

Napoleon's General Staff as those of Bourrienne, Méneval, and Fain are for comprehension of his manner of work with his civil cabinet in the field.

Any attempt to describe the Napoleonic General Staff in detail and to follow its fortunes from 1796 to 1815 would require much more time and space than are at present at the writer's command. But it may be practicable, in the light of correspondence and memoirs, and with the guidance of modern commentators such as General de Bonnal and Colonel de Philip, to delineate the main features of this system at the time of Napoleon's greatest triumphs, to bring out the principles which underlay this system, and to show how much of the Emperor's success in war was due to the business methods of a very capable General Staff and to the almost superhuman exertions of the men who served upon it.

It is agreed that the modern German system of raising and training a General Staff in peace is a model of excellence. But we must not, on that account, content ourselves with a contemplation of a single model, and least of all can we afford to do this when we are in search of the practices of great masters in the field. Moltke accounted it an honour to be considered the disciple of Napoleon, and endeavoured to adapt many of the Emperor's methods to modern use. Trace out as we may, and indeed we must, the many developments and modifications which modern staffs abroad have introduced during the last hundred years into Napoleonic strategy, tactics, and staff duties, we must still remember that the Napoleonic manner of conducting war remains the fountain-head of military wisdom, and that later inspirations must be themselves inexplicable to us unless we drink at the source whence most of these inspirations are derived.

The Napoleonic system is in some ways more applicable to British wars than that of Moltke. The latter, though nominally Chief of the Great General Staff, was practically Commander-in-Chief in the Field. Neither Napoleon nor any British commander could find any use for such an exalted assistant. The type for us, far though we may fall

short of it, is the Napoleon-Berthier combination, and consequently the methods of work of the Emperor and his famous auxiliary remain for us a subject of very particular interest. British officers, said Moltke, do not travel to the front in first-class railway carriages. Like Napoleon we wage war as a rule in countries which are very badly mapped and have few roads or none, while very often the aids which science gives to modern armies are not much more at our disposal than they were at the disposal of Napoleon. Even in Europe it is conceivable, until our communication companies are supplied to all divisions and have fully satisfied all tests, that the Napoleonic system of issuing and transmitting orders and reports may prove itself to be more practically efficient in the field than the pseudo-scientific and somewhat amateur methods in which at present we place our trust.

ORGANIZATION

The French Revolution, after the manner of its kind, began by throwing down all institutions, even the most respectable, without having any notion of what it should put in their place. It destroyed the fine point of the old Royal forces on both land and sea, and in the general cataclysm the old Royal staff was engulfed with the rest. Only a very few men, of whom Berthier was the most conspicuous, remained to perpetuate ancient traditions. But, since the conduct of armies is, after all, mainly an affair of good sense, commanders of land forces, after some initial misfortunes, soon began to cry out for the help of trained assistants. In 1790 the Legislative Assembly replaced the former *maréchaux généraux des logis* of the old Royal army by *adjudants-généraux*, whose numbers rose to 110 under the Directory. The Convention also created the post of Chief of Staff for each army, and allotted four *adjudants-généraux*, one of whom acted as Chief of Staff, to each division. This permanent *cadre* of the staff was retained all through the wars of the First Empire and numbered 135 officers in 1815. It was composed of *adjudants-comman-*

dants with the rank of colonel or lieutenant-colonel, and of *adjoints d'états-major* with the rank of captain. It was not a separate corps, but was recruited from experienced regimental officers and continually refreshed by interchange between staff and regimental men. Nearly all the celebrities of Napoleon's day, including Ney, Soult, Kléber, St. Cyr, and Desaix, either passed through this *cadre* or served in the capacity of aide-de-camp, an appointment which had far greater responsibilities attaching to it under the First Empire than it has in our Army to-day.

There was neither theory nor college for this staff. When Thiébault inquired of Donzelot how the duties of the staff should be performed, he was answered that he would find no theory except that which resulted from practice. Thiébault, at a later date, endeavoured to supply the theory by writing his *Manuel des Adjudants-Généraux*, a useful little handbook which was translated into several languages, enlarged in 1810, and even after the Restoration was looked upon as the best guide for beginners. As for the General Staff at Army head-quarters, the organization was usually laid down by Berthier at the opening of every campaign. The type is that of 1806, but Berthier's memorandum on the staff service of the Army of Italy is a good paper on modern lines, and it served as a model for later patterns.

Although the organization of *adjudants-généraux* and their assistants formed the only recognized and permanent *cadre* of the staff under Napoleon, it was far too small for the wants of the Imperial armies, and it was supplemented by the appointment to the staff of a large number of officers of all arms, who formed a staff *hors cadres* without any formal or regular constitution. But to certain principles Napoleon held firmly. He made it a rule that no officer should join a staff until he had served for two years in the line, and all staff officers were compelled to return constantly to regimental work to renew their practical acquaintance with troops. General officers were not as a rule allowed to draw their staff officers from the *Grande Armée*, but were ordered to select them from garrisons of the interior.

The Chief of Staff of an army corps was a much more considerable personage under the First Empire than he is now. He was a man capable of taking command of the corps in the absence of the marshal or other corps commander, and he was allowed to have two aides-de-camp of his own. If any general officer entitled to aides-de-camp did not possess them he was usually called to order by Napoleon, who was able to notice the deficiency in his states. The staff system under Napoleon depended not a little upon aides-de-camp and orderly officers, and the Emperor never overlooked any deficiency in their numbers.

The Napoleonic staffs were approximately about double the size of those of modern armies, and even then they were usually found to be too small for requirements, partly owing to losses in the field, but mainly owing to the prodigal use of staff officers in missions and despatch-riding. Napoleon's personal aides-de-camp stood in a category by themselves. They were all general officers selected by the Emperor from men most fit to take command in the field at critical moments and to execute with decision the most arduous missions. They formed an invaluable reserve of military talent, and we see them at work in the warm corners of every battlefield. Mouton, afterwards Count Lobair, Rapp, Savary, Drouot, Lemarois, and Bertrand were the chief figures among Napoleon's aides-de-camp in earlier days, and to these were added Reille, de Flahault, Lauriston, Gourgaud, Lacoste, Durosnel, Haxo, Corbineau, Bernard, and others in later campaigns. Each of these had two or three aides-de-camp, who were used by Napoleon to carry messages and orders when the supply of his own orderly officers ran short.

The general aides-de-camp of Napoleon were all men of action trained under the Emperor's own eyes in the hard school of war. They belonged to all arms, and were given missions in the field suited to their special talents; the impetuous Rapp to take command of a smashing cavalry attack, the rough diamond Mouton to lead infantry in some decisive assault, and Drouot, most capable of artillerymen to collect and align a great battery of guns in the traditional

Napoleonic manner. These men were all known and trusted by the Army. Their presence at the head of troops made up on scores of occasions for the insufficiency or the fall of the titular chiefs. Every *envoyé de l'Empereur*, no matter what his rank, was obeyed without hesitation, and if one may well suppose that the relations between these general aides-de-camp and the marshals were not always perfectly cordial, there is no evidence within the writer's recollection that the Imperial envoy experienced difficulty in taking over the command of troops. The system was one peculiar to Napoleonic methods. It has not survived in any modern army, but on many occasions it served the Emperor well, and it cannot be doubted that the presence on his staff of such experienced generals of all arms must often have proved, in council as in action, of the greatest service.

The Head-quarter Staff of the *Grande Armée* may be conventionally divided into five separate parts, not counting the staffs of artillery, engineers, and intendance, which were all numerous. These five parts were : the *maison militaire* of the Emperor, including the civil secretariat ; the *maison militaire* of the *major-général* ; the staff bureaux ; staff officers at disposal or *à la suite* ; and, finally, the topographical bureau. An examination of the functions of these different parts will explain the working of the system as a whole.

NAPOLEON'S " MAISON MILITAIRE "

The Emperor's civil secretariat in the field consisted of two secretaries, an archive keeper, and half a dozen confidential clerks. With this exiguous civilian staff Napoleon boasted that he could rule his Empire from the banks of the Niemen or the confines of Illyria. The duties of this civil secretariat were finally regulated by the decree of February 3, 1806. It was the practice of Napoleon to dictate his orders to anyone about him. It was the duty of the *secrétaire de portefeuille* to copy these orders, to present them for the Emperor's signature, and to be responsible for their despatch. The Secretary added place, date, hour, and the name

of the officer or *courrier* by whom they were taken. A docket on the office copy contained a summary of the contents.

Jacoutot, Bourrienne, Méneval, and Fain were in turn in charge of this service. Jacoutot succumbed to the hardships of Bonaparte's first campaign in Italy, and was succeeded by Bourrienne, who remained in favour until 1802 when he was summarily dismissed owing to a scandal arising out of an army contract. Méneval, who followed him, remained with Napoleon until the close of the Austerlitz campaign, when his health broke down. His successor, Fain, remained with the Emperor till the end, while Fain's colleague Deschamps followed Josephine's fortunes. Méneval and Fain were both created Barons of the Empire. They were men of rare discretion and integrity. They had a particular talent for seizing the main points of orders which Napoleon dictated with great rapidity, and they were able to reproduce his style, which for clearness, conciseness, and verve has never been surpassed.

In addition to the civil secretariat and the general aides-de-camp, there were immediately round the Emperor a number of orderly officers, twelve in all after September, 1806, who performed the duties which normally fall to the aide-de-camp. There were also four equerries, and last, but not least, the chief of the topographical office—*chef d'escadron*—and subsequently Colonel (1812) and General (1813) Bacler d'Albe. D'Albe with Gourgaud, two other officers, and four secretaries formed a little coterie separate from all the other branches of the staff. D'Albe was one of the most intimate and trusted of Napoleon's auxiliaries. His powers of work and large experience of his duties made him almost indispensable. He was an accomplished topographer and a fair artist. His chief duty was to set up, in every head-quarters occupied by the Emperor, whether palace, tent, or hovel, the best map extant of the theatre of war, and to mark upon it by means of pins with heads of different colours the positions of all troops of the French Army, and the assumed positions of the enemy's forces. This was done upon an immense table, which was lighted at

night by some twenty-four candles, and in order to bring out the main military characteristics of the theatre d'Albe and his assistants marked with a wash of colour the rivers, mountains, woods, main roads, and frontiers.

This map, as d'Odeleben recounts, was "*la chose à laquelle Napoléon tenait plus qu'aux autres besoins de la vie.*" D'Albe, whose office was entirely distinct from the topographical section of the General Staff, was the assistant who was usually the last to be consulted when Napoleon left his quarters and the first to be called upon his arrival at the next camp. "*Ce soir,*" D'Albe used to grumble, "*il nous tormentera.*" When at night after retiring between 6 and 7 p.m., as was his custom in the field, Napoleon rose about 1 a.m. to read the reports of his corps commanders and to dictate orders, it was always, "*Appelez d'Albe, que tout le monde se lève.*" Sprawling over the map with d'Albe—exclamations were often heard when their heads came in contact—and with his compass opened to a distance of seven or eight leagues, Napoleon calculated with extraordinary rapidity the marches of his columns, and there and then dictated those masterly orders of movement which were in themselves a title to immortal fame.

When space allowed, four small tables were set out in the corners of the same room for d'Albe's secretaries, and it was to them that Napoleon dictated his orders of movement, which were usually dealt with subsequently under Berthier's eye by Captain Salamon, an excellent officer retired on account of severe wounds, who was responsible for movements. The rapidity of Napoleon's dictation was the despair of all his secretaries. Few, if any, had knowledge of shorthand, but a form of it was invented, and certain symbols, such as a dragon's tail for the French Army, and a thorn for England, were used to represent names and things. No one was admitted to this inner circle at head-quarters unless called in by Napoleon or d'Albe. It is a great tribute to the unselfish devotion of Berthier and his staff bureaux that d'Albe should have been able to obtain all the information required for the map without encountering those difficulties

and jealousies which are so common in head-quarter staffs when a subordinate acquires an influence out of proportion to his rank.

THE "MAJOR-GÉNÉRAL"

Alexandre Berthier was a precious auxiliary to Napoleon and accompanied him in all his campaigns until 1815, when his place was filled, disastrously for Napoleon, by Soult. Beginning his career in the Prince de Lambesc's regiment of dragoons, Berthier first saw service in America, on the staff of the Comte de Rochambeau. He joined the General Staff created by Marshal de Ségur in 1783, visited the camps of the King of Prussia, served in the Vendean campaigns, became Chief of the Staff to Kellermann, and then to Napoleon, with whom he remained closely associated until 1814, taking part in sixteen campaigns in nineteen years. He was of medium height, strongly built, and active in mind and body. To great experience he united sound judgment, vigilance, modesty, and self-sacrificing devotion to the service of his master. His character was too undecided to allow him to shine in high command, but he had all the qualities for a Chief of Staff under Napoleon. He accompanied the Emperor in all his journeys and reconnaissances, without relaxing control of the business of his office. He was the faithful mirror of the Napoleonic conceptions, but he had little initiative of his own, and what Napoleon forgot was usually forgotten beyond repair. Berthier concerned himself particularly with the despatch of orders, traced out the part which each subordinate had to play, smoothed over all difficulties, and provided for all contingencies. To his indefatigable zeal, retentive memory, and alert intelligence, Napoleon was in no small measure indebted for his triumphs.

Berthier's civil secretariat consisted of a dozen secretaries and clerks. His *maison militaire* included two generals of brigade and eighteen other officers, of whom the twelve aides-de-camp were among the hardest-worked officers of the Imperial Army. They wore a special uniform, and one of the few instances on record of serious loss of temper by the *major-général* occurred when one of Ney's aides-de-camp

appeared in the red breeches which were a special mark of distinction of Berthier's personal staff. Napoleon, who took a malicious pleasure in gratifying little vanities, allowed Berthier a guard of troops drawn from his principality, and owing to the colour of their uniforms these troops were known to the Army as *serins de Neuchâtel*.

THE STAFF BUREAUS

The General Staff proper combined the duties of administration and command. It had at its head a Chief of the General Staff, or *aide-major-général*, a post filled by General Andréossy until 1809, and by General de Monthyon subsequently. In Napoleon's day the interesting discovery had not been made that a General Staff can direct the movements of an Army without knowing how it is administered and fed. Twenty-four officers constituted the field staff of the bureaus, which were in three divisions. The first dealt with correspondence, orders, countersign, movements, states, and intelligence ; the second with camps and billets, police, subsistence, and hospitals ; the third with laws, decrees, conscription, and prisoners of war. Not much more than a third of the staff officers were regularly confined to office work ; the remainder were constantly employed upon missions of every kind. A topographical section under General Sanson, with a *personnel* of ten officers, completed the Head-quarter Staff, which was accompanied in the field by a large administrative *personnel* and *matériel* divided into services of first and second line. All general and staff officers arriving at the front joined the head-quarters of the *major-général*, who allotted to them duties according to circumstances. The Head-quarter Staff in the field was so large that when Berthier reviewed it before the Russian campaign it resembled an army drawn up for battle.

It has been already noticed that Napoleon dictated orders to anyone about him. These orders, if relating to military affairs, were rarely sent out integrally to a marshal or a director of some great service. The common practice was for Berthier and the bureaus, acting conjointly as organs of

registration and transmission, to divide up an order and to issue to each subordinate concerned the parts involving his action alone. No one knew better than Napoleon the value of secrecy in war. His custom was not to disclose his projects until the moment came for their execution, and then to give to each subordinate only so much information as he required for his guidance and no more. Napoleon's orders, dictated, copied, and divided up in this manner, were then submitted to Berthier, who never signed them without reading every line and weighing the effect of every word with the utmost care. There are a few instances on record when Berthier made mistakes, or allowed slips made by Napoleon to pass unobserved, but, considering the vast volume of the work, these instances are rather the exceptions that prove a rule. Soult, in 1815, was guilty in four days of more staff sins of omission and commission than stand to the account of Berthier during nineteen years of war.

Verbal orders were invariably confirmed in writing. The utmost precision in entries of dates, hours of receipt and despatch of reports and orders, and names of places, commanders, and regiments was insisted upon by the *major-général*. All names of places, rivers, generals of the enemy, and regiments were underlined in orders. Napoleon never overlooked any infraction of these rules, which were eventually complied with by the marshals and became part of the general practice of all staffs.

STATES

The orders of Napoleon embraced every kind of operation, every branch of administration, the lines of communication, the service of the conscription, armaments, works, buildings, reinforcements, drafts, artillery, remounts, supply, and war material. These orders were based on the very exact knowledge which Napoleon derived from the states which were sent to him by his War Minister and his corps commanders at regular intervals and formed his favourite study in the field.

Twice a month he received from his War Minister eighteen large volumes, exposing the situation of his armies

from every point of view. In the *livret par ordre numérique* there was a complete statement of the situation of every regiment. This state gave the names of all the officers in the regiment, the establishments and the strengths of all ranks, the station of the regiment and its depot, the number of sick and wounded, the number of recruits assigned to the regiment by the conscription list of the year, and the names of the departments furnishing the conscripts. Entries regarding any regiment under orders to march were made in red ink by Napoleon's express order. There was next the *livret par division militaire*, which gave full details of the military situation in each one of these districts. There was also a *livret par corps d'armée*, another for divisions, and others again for garrisons, arsenals, and fortresses. Each week the Emperor received a *feuille des mouvements*, which gave the days of arrival or departure of all units at or from different stations. Finally, there was a state showing the manner in which the conscription worked in the different departments, and this particular state, which filled the *Préfets* with dread, served as a barometer of political opinions in the interior of France.

With the help of these states, which were frequently checked and controlled by the Emperor's emissaries, Napoleon was able to ascertain at a glance, and at any moment, the military situation of any fraction of his army on any given day. It was, thanks to this knowledge, regularly transferred by d'Albe to the map so far as concerned the distribution of armies in the field, that the Emperor was able to maintain his effectives, to combine the movements of widely separated portions of his armies, and to produce on the battlefield those *gros bataillons* which for so long made him the master of Continental Europe.

THE SERVICE OF INFORMATION

Napoleon knew that without good information of the enemy's strength and movements no military operation could be conducted with assurance of success. His intelligence service was, for the age, fairly complete.

Baron Fain, who was in a position to know the facts, declares in his memoirs that Napoleon never attempted to corrupt the servants of Foreign Powers, but he allows that French Embassies and Legations abroad had instruction to keep records of all military transactions, and that a special branch of the Foreign Office in Paris collated all information supplied from these sources. On the General Staff of the army in the field a senior officer centralized all the information which came in from spies, prisoners, Cavalry, and officers sent on reconnaissance, while the marshals had services of intelligence of their own.

When, as in Spain and Russia, and in Germany after 1813, spies could not easily be procured, the reports of the Cavalry could alone be trusted, and the operations of the armies suffered proportionately. Occasionally officers undertook espionage. Thus in 1815 General de Labédoyere was sent into Belgium disguised as a peasant, and it was partly on the strength of his reports of the positions of the allies that Napoleon formed his plan of throwing himself between the British and Prussian armies and of beating them in detail.

Foreign papers and gazettes were regularly supplied to Napoleon by agents and smugglers abroad, and six translators under Mounier were continually employed in extracting and summarizing all important news derived from these sources. It was from his enemy's newspapers, Thiers tells us, that Napoleon obtained his best information. The post also had few secrets for the Emperor, and from Lavalette and the mystery-men of the Rue Coq Héron no correspondence was safe. Secret service under Napoleon was not the general nuisance to everybody that it is to-day. It was frankly military, and not reptilian. But it served Napoleon's ends, and it was supplemented, before and during a battle, by a system of reconnaissance and observation which has never been equalled.

THE TOPOGRAPHICAL SERVICE

The maps of Napoleon's day were not good. The geographical service worked hard, but could never keep pace

with the rapid extension of French influence and of French conquests. In 1804 Napoleon expressed doubts whether his War Office was working on a proper system. "On fait faire des cadastres," he grumbled, "et non des cartes militaires ; d'ou il suit que dans vingt années on n'aura rien. Mettre 20 années à terminer des cartes et des plans c'est trop travailler pour la posterité." He complained, at one time, that he had no map of the Rhine from which any idea of the country could be gained. At other times he insisted that roads practicable for Artillery should be distinguished from others, that the number of houses and inhabitants of each town and village should be marked on his maps, and that good *étappen* maps should be prepared showing the distances from point to point.

Despite a good deal of criticism, the *ingénieurs-géographes*, assisted as they usually were by numerous officers of engineers, performed highly meritorious services. They triangulated Spain, Italy, Central Germany, Switzerland, and Holland. They drew up innumerable memoranda, maps, surveys, and road reports which were of the utmost service to the army. They were to the fore with every advanced guard and every independent column to survey the lines of march and the surrounding country, and to send in sketches of cantonments or positions occupied by troops. They were held strictly by Napoleon to their *rôle*, and were absolutely forbidden to suggest plans of campaign or even to mention the word "enemy" in their reports.

There were occasions when corps commanders reported that they were absolutely without maps, but one must not imagine that this situation was common. An inventory of the maps belonging to Lasalle, who was killed at Wagram, shows forty-seven maps of Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and some of these consisted of twenty-two sheets. The writer, again, purchased at Christie's some years ago a number of large cases which belonged to the first Marquis of Anglesey. These cases, which are now at the Indian Staff College, contain very fair maps of almost every country in Europe, and of many countries in other continents, on a large scale. These examples show that the best Cavalry

leaders of the day not only took great pains to collect the best maps of the day, but were able to procure them. The Topographical Service did not, especially in Russia, supply Napoleon with all the details which were required to enable him to arrange or to follow the movements of every one of his detachments and the distribution of his cantonments in villages and hamlets, but the maps sufficed for his larger strategical combinations, and details were completed by the surveyors with the troops.

THE STAFF IN THE FIELD

It was the invariable rule under the First Empire that every important order concerning movements and operations should be carried by an officer, and that several copies of such an order should be sent by different hands and different routes if there was any risk of misadventure. It was not permitted that couriers of the *estafette* service should be employed upon this duty. These couriers, as Berthier wrote to Ney and Bessières in 1807, were “faits pour courir sur les grandes routes et non pour porter les ordres de l’armée.” Couriers travelled more rapidly than orderly officers, because relays of the *estafette* service were laid out along all the grand lines of communication, and because the couriers travelled only between two stages, whereas the orderly officer or aide-de-camp had personally to carry his order to its destination. In the case of the *estafette* service the leather cases, with the words *Dépêches de l’Empereur* inscribed on a brass plate, passed from hand to hand, and it was a point of honour with couriers to travel at top speed.

The general aides-de-camp of the Emperor were seldom or never employed upon the duty of carrying orders. The duty fell upon the twelve orderly officers of Napoleon, upon the aides-de-camp of the general aides-de-camp, and upon those of the *major-général*. As the result of some unfortunate experiences, young officers were not allowed to serve in the capacity of aide-de-camp or orderly officer, and Napoleon would have nothing to do with “infants who know nothing.”

It was his custom to send his orderly officers to corps detached and to every part of the battlefield to carry and explain orders, to reconnoitre, and to return *au triple galop*. For such missions only men of experience sufficed.

The orderly officers worked hard, in the intervals of peace, to complete their education. Thus Chlapowski attended the École Polytechnique and, in addition to his military studies, occupied himself with geometry, geology, chemistry, botany, and applied mechanics. The hours of attendance were from eight to eleven, twelve to five, and seven to ten each day. Chlapowski declares that “l'expérience sans études théoriques ne peut faire un bon général,” and he observes, after describing the life at the Polytechnique, that “jeunes gens aussi occupés ne plaisaient guère aux plaisirs du monde.”

The office work of the Head-quarter Staff on the march or during active operations was reduced to a *minimum*. The staff officer on duty carried a pocket-register, in which were entered all details of orders given and reports received, the names of all officers bringing or taking such orders, and the hours of receipt and despatch. Details of marches, operations, billets, and positions were also entered in a concise form. During pauses between active operations this information was transferred to the larger office registers, and from these staff diaries the journal of operations was written up. Chiefs of staffs collected all documents needed for a complete history of every campaign, and caused every battlefield to be surveyed on a large scale.

Napoleon always rode Arab horses in the field. Many of his marshals and some even of his Cavalry leaders did the same ; nor can anyone be surprised who has learnt by experience the unequalled merits of the Arab for service in the field. The Head-quarter Staff in battle was divided into groups, each of which had its appointed place in reference to the position of the Emperor, whose immediate following was restricted so that it should not attract the enemy's fire. With the Emperor there were usually Berthier, a couple of orderly officers, and two *chasseurs à cheval*, one of whom carried the map and the other a telescope. Duroc until his

death, and Caulaincourt, who frequently carried the map, were also with the Emperor at times, but during his personal reconnaissances Napoleon was usually followed by only one officer or *chasseur*. The orderly officers were mainly drawn from the Artillery and the Engineers. All officers, including Berthier, removed their head-dress when given an order by the Emperor, and a newly appointed officer had to repeat aloud any order given to him verbally. As one of the orderly officers galloped off, another took his place from the group 150 yards in rear.

Napoleon's dislike of young and inexperienced officers on his personal staff can easily be accounted for by the responsible duties with which he constantly charged his staff. Chlapowski, placed under arrest for failing to acquaint himself with the situation of a certain corps on one occasion, was sternly told by the Emperor that "*lorsque j'envoie un officier, c'est pour qu'il sache tout.*" The orderly officers were not irresponsible young gentlemen performing the duties of galloping postmen. They were the eyes and ears of Napoleon so far as the situation of his own troops was concerned. They were expected to be able to report the exact situation and proceedings of all troops whom they encountered, and the Emperor often entrusted them, for the benefit of some marshal to whom they were sent, with his views on the general position of affairs.

No one ever troubled himself much whether the aide-de-camp or orderly officer was fresh or dead beat, whether he had a horse or not, whether he had a map or knew his way, or whether the road was safe or the reverse. An officer given a mission had to execute it, and had to use his wits to arrive safely at his destination. When De Fezensac innocently asked Ney the position of General Colbert, to whom an order was addressed, Ney answered curtly, "*Point d'observations ; je ne les aime pas.*" The duties were dangerous and hard, but the honour was great, and rewards for good service were not spared. A month after Napoleon's marriage with Marie Louise all his orderly officers were promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel and posted to the command of regiments.

These officers were often sent upon distant journeys to all parts of Europe. They were expected in such cases to ascertain everything about the garrisons, fortresses, and corps which they passed on their journey ; to take note of movements of troops, effectives, condition of war material, state of the hospitals, and in fact every military detail. Frequently Napoleon dictated precise orders for their guidance, but, whether this was the case or not, nothing excused any ignorance on their return. They were, in fact, when sent on these missions, in the position of travelling inspectors, and their reports enabled the Emperor to check the states and returns sent in by the War Office and the reports of distant commanders. In Spain and Russia the missions of these officers were often perilous. The waste of horseflesh was also considerable. Castellane found that though he had ten horses he had scarcely enough, while Lejeune relates that he lost thirty horses during his service under Berthier, including four killed under him and several eaten by the French troops.

Among the many excellent customs introduced by Berthier, one in particular must be remarked. Two hours before dusk every evening each army corps despatched a staff officer to the Imperial head-quarters. These officers brought in the latest reports and remained to carry back Napoleon's orders, which were usually ready at about three a.m. In later campaigns a second staff officer was sent from corps to army head-quarters every morning with the reports of the night. Many of the marshals, notably Davout, imitated this custom in their commands. Thiébault's Manual lays down that when an army marches in several columns an officer from the General Staff at head-quarters should accompany each column and return to head-quarters at night, bringing with him the reports of the column commander, and that the latter should send a staff officer to bring back the orders for the next day. It was also usual for corps commanders to detach staff officers to neighbouring corps or columns in order to keep touch and ensure co-operation. Some of these excellent customs are no longer

followed by modern staffs, partly owing to the smaller number of staff officers now at the disposal of commanders, and co-operation on the battlefield has thereby suffered.

The duties of guards and police at Napoleon's headquarters were performed by a battalion of the Imperial Guard and a squadron of Cavalry. Saddle-horses were divided into brigades, one of which was always saddled and bridled. Two general aides-de-camp by day and one by night were always on duty, and the horses of all officers on duty were kept saddled and bridled. The aide-de-camp on duty carried writing materials and a case of maps. A duty of the equerry was to supply local guides, who were placed in charge of the Cavalry picquet.

ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Napoleon's usual practice was to reconnoitre, both personally and by deputy, the position of the enemy on the eve or on the morning of a battle. It is well known that he possessed an extraordinary gift for penetrating an enemy's designs, for estimating his strength almost at a glance, for seizing rapidly the main features of a military situation, and for making prompt decisions in order to take and keep the initiative in battle. No one of his contemporaries, except Wellington, approached Napoleon in the art of observation during a battle, and no other army had so many trusted emissaries quartering a stricken field and bringing back news from front and wings. Wellington may have known by instinct what was on the other side of a hill, but Napoleon had a man there to see.

There was no uniform type of order in the Napoleonic armies. One point or another was most insisted upon, according to circumstances, as, for instance, at Jena that the object of the first movements was to gain space for deployment. The marshals had their idiosyncrasies, and some were more trusted than others, but all knew Napoleon's manner of waging war, and custom born of long experience enabled a few simple orders to suffice. Four words hurled at Drouot, and in a twinkling 100 guns were in action at the appointed

spot. The orders of movement were short and simple. When the enemy was at a distance, each larger unit of the army was given the day and hour of departure, the route, and the billeting zone at night. Corps orders frequently only named the hour at which the leading division was to move off, and other commanders were trusted to conform. In presence of the enemy no attempt was made to issue orders based on things which the enemy might be expected to do or not to do. The troops were ordered to advance by certain roads and in certain directions, and the enemy's presence, strength, and dispositions determined every order that followed.

Napoleon's rule was that a military order only demanded passive obedience when it was given by a commander who, being present on the ground, knew the exact state of the case, and could answer any objections raised by the officer who had to execute the order. To commanders at a distance Napoleon left the widest latitude. He had written in 1796 that "*il faut que le gouvernement ait une confiance entière dans son général, lui laisse une grande latitude, et lui présente seulement le but qu'il veut remplir.*" He seldom failed to accord to others the latitude which he had demanded for himself.

The instructions sent to St. Cyr for the operations against Naples in 1805 are a masterly example of the Emperor's manner of dealing with a distant commander. St. Cyr was not tied down to blind obedience, but was given his mission and told to find rules for his conduct in the spirit of his instructions. To Davout, again, Napoleon caused Berthier to write in 1806, "*Tout ce que je viens de vous dire doit être moins considéré comme un ordre que comme une instruction d'après laquelle Sa Majesté désire que vous lui fassiez connaître la situation des choses.*" To Berthier Napoleon wrote in 1813, "*Ecrivez au duc de Tarente . . . que ces lettres sont des instructions généraux, susceptibles des toutes les modifications que le terrain et les circonstances pourront lui suggérer.*" It is not possible in the light of this evidence to agree entirely with some distinguished French

writers who have declared that the activity and genius of Napoleon atrophied the intelligence and sapped the initiative of his subordinates, causing them to become a prey to the enemy when left to themselves.

COMMENTS

Napoleon, like many other great leaders, was in effect his own Chief of the General Staff. He did not require advisers on this staff, but he had need of experienced auxiliaries, and this need his staff supplied. In the service of this staff he employed all that was best and brightest of the bravery, talent, and intelligence of his armies, and by means of constant interchange between staff and regimental men he ensured for this staff the professional vitality which it retained almost to the end.

By his system of general aides-de-camp he secured for himself in critical moments a reserve of energy and a driving power which no other modern general has ever possessed. By collecting round him large numbers of staff and orderly officers of judgment, experience, and resource, and by employing them without rest or reprieve on every kind of mission, he preserved touch with events both far and near. It was thanks to this system, completed by his own unrivalled insight in reconnaissance, that he established and maintained throughout a battle close observation and control of events.

It is, of course, true that it was Napoleon who reflected, foresaw, and commanded, and that without Napoleon the mainspring of the *Grande Armée* was gone. The sane and precise ideas which classed themselves in his mind ; his invariable habit of seeing clearly before he moved ; of waiting till matters were ripe before he struck ; and then of striking in decisive fashion with concentrated forces—all these gifts were part of the mental equipment of the man, and enabled him to boast in 1809 that he had never given a counter-order to a regiment. But the inspirations of genius have to be conveyed in war to the executants, so that every part of an army may fulfil the functions assigned to it at

the right place and at the right time, and it was because Napoleon's General Staff was the faithful and trusty servant through whose agencies his intentions were conveyed to the troops with regularity and despatch that the execution answered to the plan.

The staff arranged that all information necessary for the guidance of Napoleon, whether concerning his own forces or those of the enemy, and whether regarding statistics or topography, should be classified and arranged in such a manner that it might be immediately accessible and useful. The business side of staff work was conducted methodically and with despatch. The orders and instructions of the Emperor, until Soult succeeded Berthier, were conveyed to commanders with regularity and precision. The practice of duplicating and triplicating important messages and of sending every order by the hand of a competent officer prevented, until 1815, that failure to co-operate which is often the despair of the higher command. The office work of the bureaus did not at any time lead to the predominance of paper or of paper men, and the staff preserved throughout the essentially active and military spirit so necessary for effective service on the field.

It was thought when Napoleon died that his system died with him. So for many long years it did. It disappeared because Frenchmen were taught by the panegyrists to attribute everything to the man and little or nothing to his devoted and faithful auxiliaries. It was with weapons filched from the staff armoury of Napoleon that the French Army in 1870 was struck down. It was realized by the painstaking Prussians, who looked beneath the purple and the laurel leaves, that there was a whole body of staff doctrine to be discovered in the gigantic labours of Berthier and his auxiliaries, and it was because Moltke found in this doctrine the key to success in war that his nation, and not the great people to whom the Napoleonic staff system should have descended as an heirloom, revived, however imperfectly in some ways, the military glories of the First Empire.

With our present staffs the Napoleonic system cannot be

exactly reproduced, because the numbers and composition of these staffs are not on the Napoleonic scale. With half the numbers, and in some ways a less select because less experienced *personnel*, we cannot demand from modern General Staffs and from aides-de-camp and orderly officers all the services which these organs rendered to Napoleon. It is also obvious that science has endowed modern armies with means of rapid transport and communication over long distances which Napoleon never possessed, and that some of these means, in theory at least, have taken the place of a part of the old staff machinery. But it is at least a question worth considering in relation to the conduct of armies such as we can place in the field—armies not widely differing in numbers and composition from the *Grande Armée* of 1805 and 1806—whether we might not see greater celerity, assurance, and cohesion in operations, both in peace and war, were we, while keeping abreast with the march of science, to revive many of the practices of the First Empire.

In relation to the highest art of generalship it is impossible not to see, both in war and at manœuvres, that the operations of our troops have constantly suffered owing to failure to subordinate accessories to the principal. Our besetting sin has been to lose sight of the few grand and leading principles which inspired the actions of Napoleon in war, and to exalt to wholly undeserved prominence a whole host of paltry theories and practices, which, however respectable in themselves and in their place, too often cause the main objects of strategy to become obscured.

So far as staff work in the field is concerned we can scarcely recall, as we look back over the events of the past quarter of a century, one single disappointment, whether in peace manœuvres or in the field, which has not been caused by our ignorance or our neglect of one or another of those guiding principles which determined the actions of Berthier and his assistants, and were the fruits of the ripest and richest experience of war.

CHAPTER XV

THE FRENCH ARTILLERY*

THE English have a prescriptive right to take interest in the doings of artillery in Picardy. Here, nearly 600 years ago, the first guns thundered on the field of Crécy, and here, after this lapse of centuries, a little party of English officers were privileged to see the French Artillery at the zenith of its fame.

The Law of July 24, 1909, increased the Artillery of each French Army Corps by six batteries or twenty-four guns, and raised the total number of guns in each Army Corps to 120. The new organization was tried for the first time in Picardy this year, and proved very satisfactory. No difficulty was found in moving or in handling this formidable mass of guns, and the fact was the more interesting because with battalions only 600 strong, the proportion of guns to Infantry was actually higher than would be the case in war.

The French retain the system of Corps Artillery. Each Army Corps has three Artillery brigades, each of three batteries, placed under the direct orders of each of the two divisional generals, and four brigades, each of three batteries, under the direct orders of the Army Corps commander. All these guns are 75 mm. quick-firers. There are no howitzer batteries in the Army Corps, and the heavy batteries of 120 and 155 mm. are army organs, not directly at the disposal of corps commanders. It is generally conceded by the best military opinion in Europe that in point of material and training the French Artillery is unrivalled. A longer

* From *The Times* of October 8, 1910.

experience of the quick-firing gun, and the fact that it is peculiarly suited to the French temperament and character, have been turned to good account. The presence at the head of the Umpire Staff of General Percin, whose services to his arm have been great, and whose training of the 27th Regiment in 1900 set a bright example, was a guarantee that the performances of the Artillery at the manœuvres would be watched by practised eyes.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH THEORIES

There is a considerable difference between French and English theories on the subject of Field Artillery, and a greater difference still between the practices of the two countries. The French found, when they secured their new gun, that they had not only much to learn, but much to forget. A new weapon, in their eyes, required new tactics. They threw overboard all lumber and concentrated their attention upon paralysing the enemy before he had time to turn round. They aimed at decisive results at normal fighting ranges, took for their leading principles *pas de choses compliquées, pas de calculs savants*, preferred approximate, simple, and rapid solutions, and sought to utilize to the full the new properties of their gun. All their field training aims at prompt decision, followed by a prompt order, in presence of any given situation. A French battery at a practice camp has been seen to open fire at 3,800 metres against targets representing Infantry concealed below the slope of a hill, to complete the practice in two and a half minutes, and to obtain sixty per cent of hits.

Our aims have been different. We have striven rather to work forward from our older lines, and we have, in particular, endeavoured to obtain extreme accuracy at much longer ranges than those at which the French usually fire. We have introduced complication after complication, most of which, if the French are right, are mere practice-camp flummery ; we are much slower than the French in ranging and in opening fire for effect, and there is much to be said

for the view of the Territorial gunner who said that he could manage one gun well enough, but that to command a battery with all our complications required the brain of a mathematician coupled with the wits of a ready-money bookmaker. The French simplicity is far better suited to Territorials than our complexity. If the French are right in believing that from 2,000 to 4,000 metres are the normal fighting ranges, then their system may be right. The French view is that Artillery fire at ranges over 4,000 metres will be infrequent in war, because objects are usually invisible at such ranges in Europe, and because, when they are dimly visible, observation is very difficult, ranging a very delicate business, and fire usually erratic. It is only in quite exceptional circumstances, such as the appearance of hostile troops in assembly formations, or the discovery of the enemy in column of route, that long ranges are considered permissible for Field Artillery.

Our experiences in South Africa have led to practice at these long ranges, and it is questionable whether we have clearly decided whether such ranges will be the rule or the exception in European warfare. If there will be Artillery decisions at 5,000 to 6,000 yards, or, at all events, important Artillery engagements at such ranges, then our system of obtaining great accuracy in a deliberate manner and with a less expenditure of ammunition may prove superior, for the watering-hose system loses something of its virtues at long ranges. For the French theory there is this to be said—namely, that decisive results have seldom if ever been obtained in Europe by Artillery at long ranges, while for our theory our gunners affirm that extreme accuracy comes first, and that they can emulate the French rapidity without difficulty if they please. As, however, we do not possess the automatic fuze-setter which gives the French battery undoubted superiority in the conduct of rapid fire and the *tir progressif*, and as three four-gun batteries are superior as instruments of combat to two batteries each of six guns, it is possible that a friendly competition, could it be arranged, might prove us to be wrong.

FRENCH ARTILLERY TACTICS

As on previous occasions, the half-covered position was invariably, or almost invariably, adopted by the French Artillery at the manœuvres. The distance behind the crest varied with the gradient, and the position of the target, from ten yards to 200. Range-finders, signallers, and distant observation parties were practically never used. The battery commander's party, which had the appearance of a troop of horse in the 2nd Division during our recent manœuvres, was not found necessary. There are in principle officers with the Infantry in front and look-out men to watch flanks, but no other parties are sent out. The battery commander is rarely out of hearing of his officers. If he is, he is connected with them by a chain of men to pass his orders. The presence of the battery commander with his unit is an almost invariable rule. Usually he stands on a tipped-up wagon-body on the flank of the battery, and the brigade commander on another between the flanks of two of his batteries. It is the rule that the teams should not be visible from the front when the battery comes into action. On one occasion a brigade trotted up to its position with all its gunners and drivers running on foot beside the teams. It is a question of defilade.

The main object of the French and of every other well-regulated Artillery is to facilitate the forward march of Infantry. The different ways of employing the three batteries of a brigade in pursuance of this object vary according to the situation of the moment. The whole brigade may be *batterie d'infanterie*, or the whole may be *contre-batterie*—that is to say, for use against Artillery—or the three batteries may have distinct missions. In the latter case, for example, the brigade commander may name one unit as *batterie d'infanterie*, one as eventual *contre-batterie*, and keep the third at his disposal for use as may be required. If, at the opening of an action, there is either no hostile Infantry in view, or no hostile Artillery which has opened fire, the brigade commander keeps a proportion of his guns at his disposal. The system of *zones de surveillance*, which gives

each battery commander a zone to watch, is also common. Every battery unlimbered and not in action is *en surveillance*, and must be ready to open fire at any moment.

Battery commanders range with all four guns, ordering one round battery fire, and almost invariably with time shrapnel. This economizes time and facilitates observation, while the result of ranging shots may often approach that of regular fire for effect. Ranging with time shrapnel requires very perfect fuzes, and those of the French are excellent. In the half-covered position the flash of the guns may often be observed, approximately once in every six rounds. Powder used at manœuvres is far from smokeless. In moist atmosphere and in low ground a thin haze of smoke can be observed. Divisional Artillery usually accompanies its division and acts according to circumstances. The Corps Artillery is of course thrown in at points where special efforts are needed, or to resist the principal attack of the enemy. As many as eighteen batteries were counted massed together in one position, namely, in the case of the Third Army Corps at Morvilliers. In this case the least distance between guns was two yards. The normal interval between guns in action is sixteen metres.

TIR PROGRESSIF

Tir Progressif, or searching fire, is the distribution of fire in depth over a defined area by successive alterations in elevation. If, for example, a bracket of 200 metres has been obtained between 2,400 and 2,600 metres, each gun fires two rounds at each of the four following ranges—namely, 2,300, 2,400, 2,500, and 2,600 metres. If the series is fired only once, the distribution of the shrapnel bullets over the area is not equable, but at the same time very little can escape the deluge. It is the most rapid means of bringing fire to bear and of hitting the enemy quickly, and it is consequently more employed by the French Artillery than any other form of fire for effect. A more elaborate method, as the French are quite aware, may give better results in time with a smaller expenditure of ammunition, but they think that the

use of these elaborate methods requires qualities that are rarely found, and that the *tir progressif* is within the reach of everybody. The depth of zone covered by the *tir progressif* is about 450 metres, and a series is fired in thirty-five to forty-five seconds. The moral effect of a great number of shells falling rapidly in a given area must not be disregarded.

The results of a great number of series of *tir progressif* show that 45 per cent of hits are made at 2,000 metres against Infantry standing in single rank ; 33 per cent at 3,000 metres, 21 per cent at 4,000 metres, and 14 per cent at 5,000 metres. Against a single rank of Infantry lying down the hits are 19 per cent at 2,000 metres, 16 per cent at 3,000 metres, and 13 per cent at 4,000 metres. Against Artillery in the open with shields of the French pattern the hits are 20 per cent at 2,000 metres, 15 per cent at 3,000 metres, and 11 per cent at 4,000 metres. These figures are given only as an indication. Were the results in war to equal those of peace, nothing could resist a superior Artillery. This is, however, far from being the case, partly because batteries are in war usually under fire themselves, and partly because the living target has an inconvenient habit of behaving differently from the target of the practice camp. The statistics of the battlefield discount to some extent the records of peace practices.

The *tir progressif* is frequently combined with sweeping, or *fauchage*, and is usually employed against a moving target, or against hostile guns in action behind a crest, or to deny the passage of hostile troops across some zone. Frequently a battery commander in opening fire for effect is content with a 400-metre bracket, and even at times with a short burst and without completing his bracket. When, by ranging or otherwise, a bracket of under 200 metres has been obtained, the *tir progressif* is not used, and against any obstacle or fractions of *matériel* a single elevation is the rule, as it also is against troops when a bracket of fifty metres has been secured. It is a great mistake to suppose that the system of searching and sweeping areas is the only resource

of French Artillery. In the *tir à démolir* against *matériel*, for example, after the fifty-metre bracket is obtained, the battery commander opens fire for effect with rectifications, if necessary, after every four rounds. He orders, for example *Par 4, cadence lente*, 2,150, so that he may have time to observe, and if the desired result is not obtained he makes changes of twenty-five metres in the sense needed. With explosive shell it takes French Artillery, on an average, twelve to fifteen rounds to destroy a hostile gun, or twenty to twenty-five rounds if percussion shrapnel is used.

CONTRE-BATTERIE

Fire against Artillery behind a crest line normally begins with ranging for the 200-metre bracket, continues with the *tir progressif*, and ends with fire for effect with high explosive shell after the 100-metre bracket is obtained. With high explosive shell the fire normally begins with *rafales* of two rounds per gun, the first fired at the extreme range of the 100-metre bracket + 100 metres, and the remaining salvoes at ranges diminished successively by twenty-five metres until the rounds are observed to reach the crest and consequently to be short. Strictly speaking, this is *tir régressif* rather than *progressif*, and, though it has also been recommended for searching fire with shrapnel, it is seldom so used, because it is a complication. In this discharge of high explosive shell the hostile battery is supposed to be not more than 200 metres beyond the crest. It is supposed to have a front of 100 metres and a similar depth. The practice gives fifty bursts per hectare, or an average destructive effect equal to thirty-five per cent. As a variation, and if the hostile battery is visible, the battery commander uses one of his guns to effect the *tir à démolir*, and leaves his lieutenant to plaster the enemy with shrapnel from the three other guns.

FIRE AGAINST INFANTRY AND AIRSHIPS

Hostile Infantry groups are fired at by sections or single guns until the hostile firing-line thickens at some hedge,

bank, or fold of the ground. Fire for effect is then begun at a single elevation, followed by slow fire, varied by *rafales* whenever the Infantry tries to move. The *maximum* elevation at which an airship can be hit by the French Field Artillery is 830 metres, but if the trail be buried to the depth of half a metre an airship can theoretically be hit at an altitude of 1,600 metres and at a range of not over 6,800 metres. When the trail is buried, however, the gun does not shoot so well. The *tir progressif* is the normal fire against airships.

SHIELDS, SHRAPNEL, AND TEAMS

In the selection of covered positions it is the tactical mission of the battery which gives the law. Defilade may be reduced to nothing if the hostile Artillery has great command over the object fired at, or if slopes are very steep. The French batteries are often much exposed and the shields of the guns give very moderate protection. The captain in his observation post on the wagon body is entirely without cover. It is curious that the French have not remedied these defects, which must be perfectly well known to them. Theoretically, the battery is supposed to intrench in its spare moments, but this is seldom done at manœuvres. On the other hand, the French Artillery can be switched on rapidly against any target, and must be a tremendous weapon in battle from the offensive point of view. The French shrapnel has 290 bullets and can serve as incendiary shell, as it contains a good quantity of black powder. The nominal rate of fire is fifteen to twenty rounds per gun per minute.

French Artillery teams are much inferior to ours, and the condition of the harness would bring tears to the eyes of a British battery commander. This latter blemish is, however, of little importance, for French batteries will take the field in war with practically new harness. Excellent staff work, first-rate march discipline, regularity of pace, rapidity of decisions, and absence of delay in the transmission of orders conduce, even more than smart driving and smart teams,

to rapid action on the battlefield. French Field Artillery never gallops and rarely trots very fast. Hence teams are seldom fatigued, and the orderly deployment of the arm in action is secured without distress to men or horses.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Four years ago, in recording the lessons of French Manœuvres, the writer explained briefly the ideas current in France on the subject of Artillery, and suggested that they deserve very close attention. Our Field Artillery, however, has not been sufficiently inspired by them, and has gone its own way. It is consequently, and arm for arm, rated below our Infantry by foreign experts. Now, however, our Military Attaché in Paris—namely, Colonel Fairholme, who is a modern and up-to-date Artilleryman, and has recently commanded a brigade of Field Artillery at home—will be able to present the War Office with expert views on the subject of the French Artillery, and, should his experiences coincide with those of the writer, some attention may perhaps be paid to them.

The French cannot match our driving and our turn-out, but, after a longer experience of the new gun than any other people, they have discarded in a deliberate manner nearly all the complications in which we still revel, and have reduced ranging, conduct of fire, and fire tactics to their simplest terms. They do not deny for a moment that the meticulous care displayed by our Artillery in ranging, and the use which we make of distant observation parties, range-takers, signallers, directors, and plotters are all very good things in their way ; but they hold that all this procedure is foreign to the atmosphere of the battlefield, and they prefer more rapid and more simple solutions, because they consider them to be more practical, more serviceable in war, and better suited to the capacity of the average battery commander.

The writer believes that the French are right, and that an advance on our side towards French simplicity would at one and the same time enhance the usefulness of our guns in

action, and increase the value of the Territorial Artillery to our Second Line. The conditions precedent to the successful emulation of the French Artillery are, however, first, the adoption of the four-gun battery ; secondly, the introduction of an automatic fuze-setter ; and, lastly, the provision of perfect fuzes, to admit of certain ranging with time shrapnel.

CHAPTER XVI

TENDENCIES IN THE GERMAN ARMY*

I

THE BASES OF GERMAN POWER

THE military power of the German Empire does not rest upon the efficiency of Army and Navy alone. It rests upon national discipline, which enables the whole weight of a great people to be brought to bear upon a foe. It rests upon expanding commerce and protected agriculture. It rests upon education, science, order, method, and perseverance in every branch of the national life. It rests broad-based upon a population of sixty-five million souls, which may be doubled within fifty years, and lastly upon a tariff which, be its theoretical disadvantages what they may, has at least this supreme merit which no one can deny—namely, that it keeps the people at home and gives them work.

The administrator of the German Army is the most fortunate mortal of his kind. He can always count with certainty upon his money and his men, and so long as the Imperial Constitution stands, neither tricks nor pranks of vote-catching demagogues need influence him at all. An admirable corps of officers, carefully recruited, provides chiefs in the junior ranks of excellent education and exceptional quality. The German Army is collectively an efficient instrument for war because its training is based upon the complete, prolonged, and highly professional education of each individual man. Each unit commander is encouraged to think and act for himself and to teach his

* From *The Times* of January 23 and 30, February 6 and 20, 1911.

men to do the same ; he is solely responsible for the instruction of his men and is limited as little as possible in his choice of means. The aim is to possess handy and supple units of all arms, trained to meet with resolution, constancy, and intelligence the ever-varying difficulties of combat in all ground. Parade exercises are still executed with the utmost precision, because their strengthening influence upon discipline is recognized to be great, and because pomp and parade impress imaginations and create opinion which is everything in war. But the field work of troops rejects all complicated movements and formations, and aims at that studied simplicity which is indispensable on the modern battlefield. To develop the initiative, intelligence, and judgment of the *cadres* first, and then of the rank and file, is the ideal of German military training.

THOROUGHNESS OF THE TRAINING

Constant and painstaking attention to detail, exercised during a long period of years, has caused the act of mobilization to become almost automatic, while the construction of numerous railways and a thorough appreciation of railway strategy ensure speedy concentration upon land frontiers or the coast. The financial preparation for war, not even begun in England, has been concluded in Germany. The mutual aid of covering troops and fortresses upon the frontiers has been brought to a high pitch of perfection. Over all the great machinery for war the General Staff rules as master, makes its influence for good felt in a thousand useful ways, and penetrates the Army to the core. If neither Frederick nor Moltke lives to ensure to German Armies the leadership of genius, the school of these masters dominates all peace training, and, while offering neither prescriptions nor recipes for victory, unites the whole Army in common effort for a common end.

The German Army and Navy are permeated through and through by the spirit of the offensive pushed to its extreme limits. The resolution to conquer at all costs is the dominating note. The tone of command and manners of decision

are assumed even by those less fortunate beings intended by Nature to be submissive and irresolute. Last, and best of all, policy and war march hand in hand and afford one another unbending support. Few people in England realize yet, though they will realize in time, what Germany is and what the Germans are when set upon the pursuit of soul-stirring ideals. The preparation for war by all diplomatic and military means, to the last breath of man and horse, and with a steadfast regard for the overthrow of the most probable enemy, is carried to lengths of which the people of England have little or no conception. It is true that in the dull and never-ending routine of barrack life German officers often become stale and fatigued. It is true that the natural military qualities of the German as a fighting man are not equal to those of certain other races in Europe. It is true that Meckel's *Sommernachtstraum* still haunts the imagination of those who know the German soldier best. It is true, probably, that the superlative excellence of German preparation for war may not be equalled, nor nearly equalled, by the execution. But the German Army is, all the same, a great and formidable machine. Silently, on the whole, and certainly without ceasing, the German nation nerves and prepares itself for the next great struggle which is in front of it, the "hardest struggle of all."

THE PRINCIPLES OF GERMAN STRATEGY

The vast numbers placed in motion by modern war, and the frightful costliness of war itself, whether waged on land or sea, make it a primary need for a country circumstanced as Germany is that the campaign shall be short and sharp. These are considerations which, with their consequences, must never be left out of sight. The mobilization of the *élite* of the population of a nation in arms will suspend many activities and paralyse others. The cost of a land war to Germany has been reckoned by Dr. Riesser at £900,000 a day for three million men under arms, and the cost of the first six weeks of war has been estimated at 122 millions. By using her floating money, by issuing Treasury

bills and bank-notes up to three times the amount of the cash reserve, and by some additional taxation, it is supposed that Germany will be able to meet the initial cost of a great war. But the time will soon arrive when internal resources will be exhausted and foreign loans will be required to meet at least two-thirds of the cost of war. Given the present grouping of the Powers and the not too brilliant financial position of Germany's chief allies, the placing of loans to any considerable amount abroad in time of war is likely to encounter insuperable obstacles. Even in a purely maritime war, though the immediate outlay will be less, the losses, both direct and indirect, will be severe, and it will be necessary for German strategy to bridge over by resolute and decisive operations a period full of danger for German trade, sea-borne commerce, and possessions oversea.

It was probably considerations such as these which caused Field-Marshal Count Schlieffen to declare in his celebrated article *Der Krieg in der Gegenwart*, published in the *Deutsche Revue* for January, 1909, that long and dragging wars were impracticable because the existence of the nation depended upon the uninterrupted activity of commerce and industries. These considerations lie at the very root of German strategy, which demands mass warfare, rapid decisions, and decisive successes. So long as Germany's rivals, by their preparations, precautions, and intimate co-operation, deprive her of the reasonable hope of achieving those rapid successes which her situation requires, the peace of Europe is secure. It is because England, provided she is not crushed at the outset by a hostile initiative and surprise at sea, has the power to compel Germany to fight the long and dragging war which German strategists dread, that English hostility is feared. It is needless to point out what splendid and sustained efforts the German people and their allies are making to reverse this embarrassing situation.

STRATEGIC CONCENTRATION

During their initial concentration upon a land frontier German armies will, at first, be closely grouped, and prudence

will probably dominate in all arrangements which have been thought out coolly in time of peace. Sudden blows with non-mobilized or semi-mobilized land forces or fleets are legitimate acts against unprepared enemies, but it would be contrary to German principles to begin an offensive movement against a hostile nation in arms before the assembly of the bulk of the German forces. The covering troops on a land frontier, and the fortresses, have the mission of protecting the act of concentration, and it will only be when this concentration is complete that the masses will move forward, and will be launched, as Bernhardt has declared, like lightning from the clouds. This great blow will be delivered by the mobilized troops of the peace establishment, strengthened probably by one reserve division per Army Corps at least, while in rear will be assembled armies of reserve. The tendency of the day in Germany is to trust rather to quality than to quantity, and to place confidence in young troops, highly disciplined and trained, and led by good, active, professional *cadres*, rather than in masses of men long absent from the colours and led by chiefs who have lost something of their fire.

If the enemy attacks before concentration is completed, the modern strategist, whether German or other, has two alternative courses open to him, either to *échelon* his de-training stations further back from the frontier or to cover the zone of concentration by a system of strong places. It was the first course which commended itself to Moltke before the last war with France, and rightly commends itself now to Russian strategists. But the modern tendency in Germany is to push forward the zone of concentration as near as possible to the frontier, and since it is known, or at all events believed, that the concentration of the French armies will be effected at least as speedily as that of the German forces, extensive fortifications have been raised in Alsace and Lorraine to provide the covering troops with additional security. The movements of armies from their points of concentration to their allotted places in a line of strategic deployment present many difficulties, and unless either a

zone of manœuvre is available in advance of the most forward detraining stations, or, alternatively, the frontier is held by covering troops and fortresses, the marches ending in strategic deployment preparatory to an advance cannot be executed in due security.

THE RÔLE OF FORTRESSES

What, then, is the *rôle* attributed to German fortresses—for example, on the French frontier—during the preliminary stage of a great war? A great change has come over German ideas on this subject since Moltke's death. In his day little was done to defend by works the chief zone of concentration in Lorraine, and the most eminent German soldiers applauded this decision, and saw in it a happy proof of confident strength and offensive tendencies. Von der Goltz, Sauer, Blume, and many others all preached at the time from the Moltke text. But directly after the Master's disappearance the work of fortifying not only Alsace but Lorraine as well began with feverish activity, until at length the military appearance of the Reichsland was transformed. Strassburg, already a great place of arms with a perimeter of nearly thirty miles, saw its influence extended by the occupation and defence of the Mutzig-Molsheim position which, with Strassburg, forms a great bridge-head, and protects the left of the German armies in Lorraine from envelopment. Neu-Breisach, feebly fortified up to 1890, became another prepared place of arms and saw its front of defence extended to some thirteen miles. Istein, again, was covered with modern and powerful defences; and Alsace, as a whole, became well equipped to resist attack and to cover the concentration or the retreat of German troops.

Even more was done in Lorraine. Metz, which had preserved up to the year 1899 its old perimeter of 1870, received a new girdle of groups of works some five miles in advance of the old line of forts. It has now a perimeter of forty-seven miles and is obviously destined for an offensive purpose—

namely, to facilitate the manœuvres of armies in its vicinity. Finally, a fort was built at Guentrage, west of Thionville, and other works on the right bank of the Moselle, in order to create, with Metz, a fortified region with a front of some forty miles destined to cover the assembly and movements of forces east of the Moselle.

It must be admitted that this modern relapse from the principles to which Moltke held so tenaciously is a striking tribute to the efficiency of French armies, but it would be a mistake to assume that the modern German predilection for frontier fortresses implies any weakening in offensive strategy. The new German fortresses may play, but are not necessarily destined to play, a defensive rôle. They are intimately bound up with predetermined movements in the preparatory stages of a great war. The use of fortresses and the eventual plan of operations are matters which are inseparable in German doctrine. The possibility of a war on two fronts is the nightmare of German strategists, and considering the pace at which Russia has been building up her field armies since 1905 this nightmare is not likely to be soon conjured away. In principle it will be the nearest enemy whom German strategists will prefer to attack first, but circumstances may compel a different procedure, and German numerical inferiority in Lorraine is not a contingency which is in all cases inconceivable. Such inferiority would, of course, in German eyes, be only one reason the more for the energetic offensive, but, as Bernhardt noticed in his book, *Über-Angriffsweise Kriegführung*, the offensive must not be taken for invasion. Invasion has far greater need for numbers than the tactical offensive. An invader must in these days, as we have good reason to know, possess great numerical superiority, because his strength becomes worn away from many causes as he goes forward, while the enemy acting in his own territory gathers strength as he retires, like a spring which is compressed.

But even without this numerical superiority it is admissible to let the enemy come and to fight him offensively on ground of German choosing. It was to such tactics that Frederick,

Napoleon, and Wellington owed many of their triumphs. The ideas of Clausewitz and Moltke on the advantages of the defensive are well known to all students of war, and are set forth clearly in one of the best of the German General Staff publications—namely, *Der Schlachterfolg*. For reasons of their own, the German Staff assume that these views are of little more than speculative interest, perhaps because the overmastering need for prompt decisions makes it dubious whether Germany can afford to incur the delays which this form of war may entail. All that need be said on this subject is that the form of the defensive battle recommended by Clausewitz and Moltke is the very reverse of passive resistance to the enemy's blows. It is merely the premeditated adjournment of the decisive act. "If after repulsing several attacks of the enemy we pass to the offensive, this procedure," said Moltke, "appears to me preferable."

STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENT

Up to a comparatively short time ago it was generally believed that in case of war with France the mass of the German armies would be assembled on the line of Metz-Strassburg, with three-quarters of the whole on the line Metz-Saverne, and one-quarter on the line Saverne-Colmar. This arrangement, admitted by Stavenhagen in his *Skizzen von den Kriegsschauplätzen Europas*, had already been anticipated by French and English experts. A generally defensive attitude in Alsace was expected, and perhaps correctly. The ground and other conditions lend themselves to the defensive in this quarter, while the reconstruction of the Strassburg fortress directly after the war of 1870 seemed to show that a defensive conception on this side was of old date. So far as Alsace is concerned, and provided the neutrality of Switzerland is firmly upheld by its people, there may still be no change in this general idea. If the Alsace frontier is not defended by barrier forts the reason is that such forts, in German opinion, have no value in hill country of moderate elevation, or in plains when

nothing restricts the enemy to a limited number of roads. It is thought that the use of barrier forts will not dispense with the need for the Strassburg-Molsheim position, that the secondary mission of barrier forts does not justify their cost, and that heavy artillery will quickly get the better of them. It is to the events of 1848 and 1866 in the Lombard quadrilateral that the German General Staff looks for inspiration in its defensive plans for Alsace, if circumstances so befall that the left wing of the German line of deployment is not required for a German, Austrian, or Italian offensive. On the other hand, the zone in Lorraine was that predestined for offensive war. Here it was expected that the preconceived plan of operations would constrain the enemy to submit to the German initiative, though it was sometimes forgotten that with this plan an enemy might have something to say.

The general plan indicated by Stavenhagen and others probably held good up to within a comparatively recent date. Then a change came over the face of affairs. The strength and preparedness of French armies, the powerful French defences, and last, but not least, the requirements of the German tactics of envelopment and the growing numbers of German armies, all cried aloud for an extension of the front of strategic deployment. Those who watched the German proceedings in the not wholly futile belief that a plan of concentration can be more or less read like an open book upon the enemy's territory, noticed with interest that the detraining platforms at Metz were gradually tripled, and that at Tréves and all along the Belgian frontier between Trois-Vierges and Aix-la-Chapelle a fresh base of concentration for an army was in course of preparation. What was apparently clear was that the axis of the future attack upon France had shifted to the north, that a great, if not the main, attack would be based upon the line Cologne-Coblentz, and that the preservation of the neutrality of Belgium and possibly of the Netherlands was threatened by this new departure in German strategy.

II

THE ENVELOPING ATTACK

The extension of the front of German deployment against France is rendered necessary by the development which has been given to Moltke's principles by leading German soldiers. All these theories have their origin in Moltke's "Instructions for Superior Commanders of Troops," which were written in 1869, but remained unknown outside a select circle until several years after Moltke's death. These Instructions were summarized by the writer in *The Times* of September 29 last, and it need only be recalled that they indicated an advance on a broad front and a combination of a frontal and flank attack upon the enemy as likely to lead to incomparably more favourable results than the tactics of penetration.

VIEWS OF VON CAEMMERER AND SCHLICHTING

The tendencies of modern German strategy have been described in General von Caemmerer's *Die Entwicklung der Strategischen Wissenschaft im XIX Jahrhundert*, which should be read by every British officer in Karl von Donat's excellent translation. This book shows how Moltke followed, but adapted to modern conditions, the great principles inculcated by the precepts and practice of Napoleon, and how again modern German soldiers, and notably General von Schlichting, whose teachings recur time after time in the latest German regulations, elaborated still further the system of Moltke. It may safely be affirmed that not even the rudiments of German policy, strategy, or tactics can be understood by those who have not completely mastered and assimilated this all-important side of German doctrine.

The modern German theory of war, fully adopted by the Great General Staff and by all the German training manuals, starts from the point that the enormous increase of fire effect gives greater importance every year to the enveloping form of attack, and renders penetration more and more difficult. Von Schlichting fully admitted that the

tactics of penetration might often give more brilliant results at manœuvres than the tactics of envelopment, but he attributed the reason to the fact that all peace exercises proceed with abnormal rapidity, and that strong forces of all arms are not as a rule allowed by umpires to stand their ground in the manner that would be the case in war. Von Schlichting held firmly to Moltke's views and advocated strategic deployment on a wide front, with a day's march for interval between each Army Corps, and each corps in two columns, except on the flanks, where each corps was to march on a single road. In this deployment the reserve was massed at a distance of a day's march behind the exposed flank, and the whole line presented, in its general characteristics, a thin centre and strong wings.

LESSONS OF GERMAN MANŒUVRES

Since the Russo-Japanese War the whole of the German training manuals have been revised. The infantry *Exerzier Reglement* of May 29, 1906, was the first to be turned out of the mill, and no better compendium of modern German tactics exists than this remarkable book, which deserves to be read and re-read many times. All these manuals conform carefully with the cherished principles of the enveloping form of attack. So do the chief volumes published in recent years by the leaders of military thought in Germany, while the practice of German generals at manœuvres shows that this form of attack has become almost an obsession. As it is less the regulations themselves than the spirit in which they are applied that should weigh with us, this question of manœuvre practice is worth a few moments' consideration.

In 1903 and 1904 there was uniform manœuvre and battle in line of columns of divisions, uniform frontal fights by two or three divisions, and uniform turning movements by a third or a fourth. The four divisions of 1903 marched on a front of seven and a half miles, and the three divisions of 1904 on a front of five miles. In 1905 the present Chief of the German General Staff for the first time took the place of the veteran Count Schlieffen, and spectators were all agog

for a change of doctrine. No change occurred. The plans for envelopment were made directly the position of the enemy was ascertained. If the turning division met a similar movement on the part of the enemy, a parallel battle resulted. If not, as on September 14, each party enveloped a different flank. The marching formation was exclusively that of columns of divisions in line abreast, each division covered by its own advanced guard. When one or other side was directed to occupy a defensive position, the *minimum* of force was used, judiciously disposed and solidly intrenched. One wing, if possible, rested on some natural obstacle, and on the other were the reserves ready to act offensively.

In 1906 it was the same story. On September 11 a wing of the 5th Corps was turned by a whole division. On September 12 the 6th Corps attempted the same manœuvre against the left of the 3rd Corps. Hausdorf, on which rested the Red left, was attacked in front by one division and in reverse by another. In 1907 no change took place, though the conduct of the manœuvres was exceptionally bad. There was the customary lineal deployment by divisions abreast, each in its allotted zone. The front was seven miles long for the three divisions on each side, and there was no general reserve. In 1908, again, there was the usual march and combat in line of divisions, and the dominant idea was the enveloping movement against a wing. The manœuvres of 1909 south-east of the Odenwald represented the happenings at the outbreak of a war and were, therefore, of a special type, but nothing occurred to vary the previous indications. Less infinite in variety than Cleopatra, the German strategist is the slave of a single idea, for over and above an advance in line of columns of divisions and the envelopment of a hostile wing the German general at manœuvres does not seem to have any ideas worth mentioning.

OPINIONS OF FIELD-MARSHAL COUNT SCHLIEFFEN

It must be remembered that this enveloping manœuvre, wearying as its constant reiteration may be, is high in favour

with great dignitaries. Count Schlieffen praised it highly in his famous article, and the German Emperor in his turn praised Schlieffen's article in his New Year's address to his generals last year. Schlieffen holds that when strategic deployment is complete troops should march on fronts at least as broad as those which they will occupy in battle, and that the old system of concentrating for battle has lost much of its former significance. A corps with 144 good guns and 25,000 good rifles can, he declares, do ten times as much as in the days of muzzle-loaders, and, if it takes up three times as wide a front as it did forty years ago, it is not sapping its strength but increasing it. Count Schlieffen holds strongly that, for decisive and annihilating attacks, the front and one or both flanks of the enemy must be attacked, and that, if there is no marked superiority of force, the attack on the flank must be strengthened at the expense of that on the front ; but he adds that it is imperative that the front should be attacked. Bernhardi has gone so far as to deny the utility of holding the enemy in his front, but the infantry manual absolutely rejects this suggestion, and on this point of doctrine Bernhardi has few followers.

VIEWS OF THE GREAT GENERAL STAFF

The view of the German General Staff is that victory gained by the penetration of a front can only be the result of some lucky chance quickly recognized and exploited. To those who object that the systems of Napoleon and Moltke differ profoundly, the German Staff reply that in principle there is no difference at all. They say, and with much truth, that side by side with great preliminary concentrations, like those of Austerlitz and Wagram, must be set the wide fronts of Napoleon's columns in 1805 and the successful attempt to gain the flanks of the Austrian armies and to march upon Mack by a concentric movement. Similarly it is remarked that a convergence of two Napoleonic armies on the field of battle brought about the victory of Bautzen. To those who quote Napoleon's *bataillon carré de 200,000 hommes* in order to characterize it as a system, the

German Staff reply that the *bataillon carré* stood on a front of twenty-five to thirty miles when traversing the Frankenswald ; that in 1806 similar dispositions were made ; that the distribution of Napoleon's armies varied with the situation ; that at one time they were more extended, and at another more closed up ; and that similar varieties of procedure were adopted by Moltke in 1866 and 1870.

The Germans, for psychological reasons, do not admit the inviolability of fronts, and in this they are wise, for if troops were convinced that hostile fronts were inviolable they would immediately become aware of the inanity of their efforts when ordered to attack a position in front, and this would have a disastrous and demoralizing effect upon all ranks. But, in effect, the Germans disbelieve in tactics of penetration. They think that troops which attack the front of a hostile line of battle will be crushed by converging fire and driven back by the reserves of adjacent sections of the hostile line. The striking successes of Napoleon in the tactics of penetration were, in German opinion, largely due to the short range and comparatively innocuous effect of the fire-arms of his day. It is thought that long-ranging guns and rifles can nowadays bring a cross fire to bear upon an assailant from positions concealed from this assailant's guns, and that, no matter what formation is adopted, it must prove extremely vulnerable.

USE OF RESERVES

In general, and in the spheres of both strategy and tactics, German reserves will be massed upon the wings. Reserve field armies, accumulated, for example, behind the Rhine, may enable disasters to the centre to be retrieved, but the main offensive effort must be expected on a wing. From the tactical point of view it is uncertain what proportion of troops, say, in an army of four or more army corps, will be retained in the hands of the army commander as a reserve. It has only been in the years 1897, 1903, and 1909 that the Germans have collected over 100,000 men for manœuvres, and no certain indications of the probable strengths of an

army reserve can be gleaned from those three experiences. To judge by such practice as we have seen, not more than a tenth of the force will be retained as a general reserve, and for the greater part a reserve of this character is likely to be composed of artillery, machine-guns, and ammunition columns. Though the Germans have abandoned corps artillery, they seem inclined to revert to it by indirect ways, and the heavy artillery remains an army organ, and is especially suitable for this particular purpose. It is with guns that a German commander will succour menaced points, act on the flank of the enemy, and support his decisive attack, while many German authorities lay more stress upon reserves of ammunition than of men. The German general who, in critical times, called for his boots and the corps artillery is likely to find many successors.

GERMAN CONCEPTION OF THE BATTLE

It will be seen—for the evidence is quite conclusive—that the general principle of the German offensive battle is to fix, or *binden*, the enemy upon his front, and then to turn and crush a wing. It is the manœuvre which succeeded in 1870 and was successfully applied by the Japanese in Manchuria. It is thought in Germany that the best means to fix the enemy in his front is to attack him vigorously, but if, for any cause, forces are insufficient for such attack, either the frontal attack is only threatened or a delaying action is fought. The Germans have rather outgrown the idea that when troops are liable to be overwhelmed they should merely sit round their guns and whistle a patriotic refrain. The breaking off of the fight—*Das Abbrechen von Gefechten*—has been the subject of one of the Great General Staff's most fascinating monographs, and, although the difficulties of this delicate operation are acknowledged, they are not considered insuperable. The gradual withdrawal of the frontal attack before a hard-hitting onslaught of the mass of the enemy's forces may at times be desirable in order to facilitate envelopment by the flank columns. In any case the co-relation of frontal and flank attacks must remain close. The flank

attack must intervene before the frontal attack is crushed, and the frontal attack must not allow itself to be bluffed by weak forces while the enemy turns and crushes the flanking attack. The relation in strength, time, and space between the frontal and flank attacks of the Japanese in Manchuria is one of the most important subjects that can be studied by general and staff officers.

STRATEGICAL INFERENCES

It is only natural that we should ask ourselves how these theories will work out upon a strategical theatre. It is evident that, if there are forty-eight active German divisions, and perhaps twenty-four of reserve, in first line, and if the whole force is deployed in line of columns of divisions at intervals of five miles, the front occupied will be 360 miles in length. As the Franco-German frontier from Longwy to Belfort is approximately only the half of this length, and is barred in first line by four great fortresses—Verdun, Toul, Epinal, and Belfort—and by the lines of barrier forts between the two first and the two last, it is clear that space for carrying out the German theories without violating neutral frontiers is wanting. In practice, of course, no such crude deployment would be dreamed of. Armies will be grouped for the prosecution of the plan of campaign, whatever it may be, and in each army one or more corps may at first be held back, while the general reserve for each group of armies may be strong.

At the same time, the front must be great if these German theories are to be applied. In *Der Grosse Krieg der Jetztzeit*, General von Falkenhausen has made a study of the problem of handling great armies, and he has assumed, as a matter of course, that the territory of both Belgium and the Netherlands will be violated by the contending armies. General von Falkenhausen assumes the junction of six Austrian Army Corps with the German, and places his allied line of 1,250,000 men on a front of 250 miles, which is again in excess of the length of the Franco-German frontier. It is necessary, further, to understand how greatly the French defences

limit the space available for the employment of the enveloping or any other manœuvre. The *trouée* of Belfort is closed by the Belfort fortress, which withstood all attacks in 1871 although incomparably weaker than to-day. An advance in this direction brings a German army within the quadrilateral Epinal-Langres-Dijon-Besançon, in the narrow valleys between the Monts Faucilles, the plateau of Langres, and the Jura. No one can describe this as an inviting theatre for the practice of the German theories. The Lunéville-Neufchâteau *trouée* is more practicable ; but, as a large part of the French forces may be found here with its flanks resting on the fortresses of Epinal and Toul, it is not clear what chance there is for the execution of methods of envelopment. Lastly comes the *trouée* of Stenay, north of Verdun ; but through the narrow neck, twenty miles broad, between the most northerly fort of Verdun and the Belgian frontier, no one could hope to apply the German tactics with success.

We are thus brought face to face with two alternative suppositions. Either the principles of strategy and tactics inculcated by German regulations, recommended by all the greatest German authorities and writers on war, and invariably practised at manœuvres, have no application whatsoever to existing conditions ; or else they have been adopted in full knowledge that in time of war space for deployment will be found by the violation of neutral frontiers. Between these two alternatives everyone can make his choice, and this choice may be facilitated by recollection of the opinion of the German General Staff expressed in *Der Schlachterfolg*, that exclusively frontal engagements are a real danger, and that only a sane conception of war can prevent them.

III

THE ARMY CAVALRY

If the strategical offensive is open to the German armies, and if a zone of manœuvre exists between these armies and their enemy, a German advance will probably be preceded by a strategic advanced guard consisting of one or more

Corps of Cavalry. The German cavalry, apart from the Guard, is only united in divisions for manœuvres, and the exact composition of divisions and Cavalry Corps in war is a matter for speculation. The preliminary mission of German Cavalry Corps will be to seek out the opposing cavalry and overthrow it in order to clear the way for penetration into the neighbourhood of the enemy's main columns. Airships and aeroplanes are destined to assume every year greater importance for the duties of distant and of tactical reconnaissance in co-operation with the cavalry, but the rôle of German cavalry will not on that account be seriously diminished,* and German horsemen will rather draw from these new agents of information fresh inspiration for bold action.

There is less disposition in Germany than there is in France to support the cavalry by cyclist corps or mixed detachments of all arms. The German cavalry has numbers and good quality ; it has its horse batteries and machine-guns, while the new Cavalry Drill goes far in its recommendations for the use of dismounted action. Armed thus completely the German cavalry will not in principle refuse combat with mixed forces, but will rather seek to repulse and break through them in order to prosecute its mission in vigorous style and to ascertain at all hazards the position and strength of the enemy. It is a mission of offensive exploration, and the best screen for friendly troops is considered to be the defeat of the hostile cavalry. In detail, the service of exploration is carried out on lines similar to those adopted at our last cavalry divisional training. Reconnoitring patrols, contact squadrons, and communicating posts are all arranged as ours now are, and wireless telegraphy is extensively employed. The rule that German cavalry, even patrols, are to attack the enemy promptly wherever he is met is strictly enforced. When hostile cavalry is encountered and the German divisional general decides to attack, he first allots

* "A diminution of the cavalry as a consequence of the use of dirigible balloons does not merit serious examination."—*General von Heeringen, in the Reichstag, February 23, 1911.*

missions to his horse batteries and machine-guns, then gives orders for attack to the brigades, and finally forms a reserve which he usually accompanies. There are no normal formations for the cavalry division. The cavalry combat is fought by regiments in compact lines with supports in rear and *échelons* upon the flanks. No more strength is engaged at first than the situation requires. If the dispositions of the enemy are known, heads of columns advance abreast and are directed upon the points which the commander is resolved to attack.

Protective duties are offensive or defensive. In the first case strong patrols and cyclist detachments are pushed along all available roads with the object of driving back the enemy's parties and of covering the German movement by a dense screen on all dangerous sides. In the second case a natural obstacle is preferably utilized so that hostile patrols may be restricted to a limited number of roads which are then barricaded and defended by men on foot and machine-guns. Patrols are pushed well forward, and the rest of the cavalry is grouped for support in rear, ready to repulse any attempt to break through the line. On the whole there is no wide difference between the German cavalry doctrine and our latest practice, but the Germans contemplate dismounted attacks for their cavalry on a large scale, and it remains to be seen whether these tactics will be advantageous to the army in the long run.

ADVANCED GUARDS

The Germans are not great admirers of the strategical advanced guard, other than the Cavalry Corps. Sworn foes on the surface to formalism of any kind, they do not absolutely place a ban upon the use of this instrument, but they think that it requires delicate handling, will often do more harm than good, and on the whole will usually end by a beating in detail. When armies are in close contact the Cavalry Corps or divisions will usually draw off to a flank and leave the service of close reconnaissance to divisional cavalry, aeroplanes, and infantry patrols. If there is any possibility

of contact with the enemy, German divisional and other columns will be recovered by their own advanced guards, whose duties will be to enable the main body to pursue its march in security and without molestation. The German advanced guard has not nowadays, in principle, an offensive mission. Its duty is to ensure for its main body the time and space necessary for deployment, and not to allow itself to become entangled in a fight which will force the hand of the higher command. This *desideratum* is further ensured by the presence of the commander of the main body with his advanced guard as a rule, and the German advanced guard is, in fact, little more than the first *échelon* of the deployed line. Sometimes it will consist exclusively of cavalry. At other times all arms may be employed. The advanced guard infantry is usually from a fourth to a sixth or less of the infantry of the main body, and it is customary for the divisional cavalry to march with it, less one squadron left with each division. This cavalry, amounting to one regiment per division, is usually in front and on the flanks, the vanguard next, preceded by a point company, itself headed by an infantry point of a dozen men, and the main guard a mile behind the vanguard. There is usually a distance of three miles from the infantry point of the vanguard to the head of the main body of the column. The advanced guard acts as the situation dictates. If stronger than the enemy, it may seize an opening and attack at once. But, if the enemy is prepared, the advanced guard acts with prudence and will rather retire than persevere in an action against very superior forces. In all advanced guard work the strongest detachment is responsible for touch, while smaller bodies conform with the movements of the larger.

THE APPROACH MARCH

While the Army Cavalry and the advanced guards cover the front, the main columns of the German armies, deployed on a wide front, draw near to seek for the decisive battle. It is not the German practice, or at least it is not the German theory, to temporize and hesitate until the situation is com-

pletely cleared up. This is more or less our custom, but the Germans will have none of it. Their theory rather is, in war as in politics, that a considered plan should be followed up with such tireless energy and implacable resolution that the enemy will be forced to submit to the law of a German initiative. It is not, in German opinion, the situation which should regulate the manœuvre, but rather the bold offensive which should create its own situation, which in its turn will be exploited by the manœuvre which will follow. Thus German leaders march with corps or divisional columns in line abreast at deploying intervals, ready to engage but not concentrated. The first columns which encounter the enemy attack, immobilize, and invest him with fire, all their forces engaging together, and while this direct attack by one or more units holds the enemy in his front and binds him down, the flank columns debouch upon the wings and produce the decision. The flank attack is so directed that its inner wing shall be well clear of the outer wing of the troops engaged upon the frontal attack. Much better results, it is thought, will be secured if the flanking columns are placed in suitable positions betimes than if they have to be drawn out laboriously to a flank from positions in reserve in rear of the centre.

When German columns approach an enemy they make certain preparatory dispositions. These include the passage from column of route to a broader and less deep formation, next the deployment for the march across country in small columns, and lastly, the extension of a more or less dense firing line, each company, as a rule, extending two sections and keeping one in reserve. It is the object of the Germans to secure for themselves from the first moment a decided superiority of fire. Formerly it was the rule to resort to assembly formations before engaging. Now columns as a rule move to their allotted positions by the shortest line. The direction which each column is to follow is usually settled in advance before it moves off. The front of each larger unit is very strictly delimited, and it is not permitted that one of these units should impinge upon a zone

allotted to a neighbour. Artillery is always well forward in the line of march. The Germans regard their artillery as an impassable wall, which will be presented to the enemy in all phases of an action. If two divisions are marching on the same road it is not unusual for the guns of the division in the rear to be pushed forward and to be separated for the time from their infantry. In principle the whole of this artillery comes into action simultaneously, and if possible as a surprise, but fire is not opened until the infantry begins its advance. The enemy is thereby left in a state of uncertainty as to German intentions up to the last moment. As to the infantry, it is expected to advance without firing as long as possible, and it is asked of good infantry that it shall arrive within 1,000 yards of the enemy, and sometimes closer, without firing.

THE OFFENSIVE COMBAT

The former German Regulations recognized two types of offensive combats, namely, the encounter battle and the prepared attack, or *geplanten Angriff*, the latter for use against an enemy deployed or against an organized front of defence. There are now three recognized types—namely, the encounter battle, the attack on an enemy on the defensive, and the attack of an intrenched position. There is also the *Scheingefecht*, or fight to deceive the enemy, but no dispositions are anywhere laid down for such action which must vary with circumstances and be different in each case. The general idea of the encounter battle can be gathered from what has already been said of the march of approach, and nothing further need be said about it. In the attack upon an enemy standing upon the defensive the first business is reconnaissance, which is carried out by mounted officers and by infantry patrols under smart young officers who strive to complete the information already received from the cavalry, aeroplanes, and spies. When the general direction of the attack and the positions for artillery are settled, the infantry is led to the front by covered ways, and its march is covered by small security detachments. Columns are given successive rendezvous on defined positions so that effort may

be uniform and all columns may remain abreast. When the situation becomes more clear the different units receive notice of the fronts which they have to cover, and a reserve is told off. The attack orders fix the zones, or *Gefechtstreife*, for each larger unit, and the section of the position which each is to attack. The object of this arrangement is to prevent many battalions from gravitating towards the same cover and renewing the scenes of confusion which occurred near the farm of St. Hubert during the battle of Gravelotte. It must also be remarked that the Germans have discarded an idea still cherished by many soldiers in this country—namely, that the fire-fight will be decided from a principal position, or *Hauptfeuerstellung*, within 600 yards or so of the enemy. It is rather held that superiority can only be acquired as the result of successive efforts made to capture one position after another. The combat foreseen is one which will show alternatives of success and failure, and it is recognized that “it is dogged that does it” and that all attacks must be slow. But it is considered important that efforts against each post or fraction of the enemy’s line should be closely combined, and every endeavour is made to prevent discursive fighting and tribal wrangling upon the battlefield.

It is generally agreed that in future the attack upon an intrenched position will usually have to be concluded under cover of night. By day the assailant drives in the enemy’s advanced troops, completes the reconnaissance, studies the avenues of approach, and fixes the artillery positions. The artillery fire begins by day, and that of the heavy howitzers will be particularly relied upon. If the infantry is unable to assault in the evening, it will await the night. It is recognized that the night attack requires minute preparation. Routes are marked out, guides and dark lanterns are provided. The troops receive white bands for armlets. Rifles as a rule are not loaded. The first line is shoulder to shoulder, and supports are kept close up. It is the rule that troops should reach the position whence the assault is to be made in absolute silence. They then form shelters, machine-guns are brought up, and pioneers begin to attack the obstacles in

the enemy's front while the artillery continues its fire. Fire becomes general towards daybreak and prepares the assault, which will sometimes be delivered at dawn by surprise, but may be carried out at night. The enemy's attention is distracted by simultaneous attacks at other points. All these attacks are made without packs, and the men are amply supplied with food and ammunition. The conditions considered necessary for success are convergence and simultaneity of effort, maintenance of cohesion, and close communication between the various units engaged.

THE DEFENSIVE COMBAT

A position, in German eyes, has no value unless an enemy is obliged to attack it and unless the troops which hold it can pass to the attack in good conditions. In the occupation of a position by German troops the line is divided into sections, each section has its local reserve, and the employment of the artillery is a primary consideration. Infantry takes post not less than 600 yards in front of the guns; great importance is attached to cross and flanking fire, especially from batteries hidden from the front. The Germans do not believe in advanced positions, except for purposes of deception, because such positions are apt to mask the fire from the main position and to lead to defeat in detail. This rule does not necessarily apply to points within effective rifle range of the main position.

Guns in defence endeavour to open fire together, and as an act of surprise in the hope of crushing an assailant—momentarily at all events—before his batteries have all come up. But when the hostile infantry advances, German guns open upon it, leaving their cover if need be, but continuing to engage the hostile artillery with a fraction of the guns, and especially with howitzers. Machine-guns are posted in commanding positions, whence they can flank the various groups of works occupied by the defence. All troops in the defensive line are solidly intrenched. The infantry trenches are at least three feet deep and are concealed as much as possible from the front, while entanglements of barbed wire are

extensively used. The counter-attack is not advocated before the assailant has been repulsed by fire. The German Regulations say very little about local counter-attacks, and this phase of the defensive battle is left indeterminate. On the other hand, the general reserve is given much prominence. It is not in principle massed in rear of the line occupied. It is placed on the decisive wing or on that opposite to the flank which is protected by some natural obstacle. It is kept somewhat separate from the troops in position and is intended to act as a mobile force and to secure victory by an enveloping attack. It is usually placed well clear of and in *échelon* behind the flank. It does not act until the assailant is fully committed, and it is accompanied in its march by all the cavalry available.

THE CO-OPERATION OF INFANTRY AND GUNS

In all forms of battle the close co-operation of guns with the infantry is strongly insisted upon. A close and constant service of intercommunication is preserved between the infantry firing line and the batteries which are supporting it. The effective support of infantry is of course the principal mission of the German as of other well-regulated artillery. Unity of effort is secured by the concordance of missions given to the commanders of larger units, by strict delimitation of zones assigned to each, and by the close connection between neighbouring units. It is the business of the commander to settle the positions of his guns: his artillery commander is an expert adviser only. The covered or *verdeckte* position is much used on the defensive, as it enables fire to be opened and to be maintained against a superior artillery and also favours lateral movements. But in offensive forms of combat the half-covered or *fast verdeckte* position is preferred and there is a decided tendency, in accord with the maxim *Wirkung geht vor Deckung*, to abandon cover as the fight makes progress in order to support the infantry more closely and effectively. Knowledge of the calibre, powers, and effects of the various German types of heavy guns and howitzers is indispensable to leaders who may

have to encounter German armies and to others who may have to prepare intrenched positions. The German field artillery material is fair, but fuze-setting is still done by hand, and there is no independent line of sight. In general, the German field artillery, though numerically superior, is technically inferior to the French, and it is largely due to this fact that the field artillery *Exerzier Regiment* of 1907 could not satisfy those many German officers who desired that the tactical and technical employment of artillery should be revolutionized.

IV

ENGLISH THEORIES

No one who undertakes a study of German strategy and tactics and then reads afresh the Training Manuals of the British Army will fail to discover a very marked difference between the two, especially in the conduct of the offensive battle.

Part I of our Field Service Regulations gives no answer to the question how best the enveloping form of attack should be met. It advocates for our Army, in section 102, paragraph 4, a manner of fighting much in accord with French ideas and at variance with the principles which the Germans have adopted. The recently published Memorandum on Army Training, 1910, states correctly that the underlying conception of the offensive battle is, according to our Manual, as follows: "A hard-fought preparatory action along the whole battle front, undertaken with the object of ascertaining the enemy's dispositions, wearing out his resistance, and drawing in his reserves, followed by the decisive attack at some point designated to the commander by the events of the preparatory action." "This method," continues the Memorandum, "involves the use of strong advanced guards, whose mission it is to drive in the enemy's protective troops; the development of the preparatory action by the main bodies of the various columns on a definite plan formed by the commander of the force; and the

retention of strong reserves in the hands of the commander for the decisive attack. It also involves concentration before the action is entered upon, as opposed to concentration on the battlefield."

The Memorandum goes on to speak of what it calls "another conception of the development of an action which is opposed to the above in principle—namely, a wide deployment, a simultaneous and converging advance, the envelopment of the area in which the enemy is likely to be found, and a vigorous offensive against the enemy wherever met." This method, we are told, "presupposes no general advanced guard and no general reserve, as we usually understand those phrases." But in commenting upon these two forms of combat the Memorandum is not quite in accord with the Regulations. The Memorandum says that we should incur danger were we to introduce the cult of any particular form of action, and it suggests that each of these forms is suitable to different circumstances. But the Regulations are much less catholic. They almost place German tactics upon the Index by declaring that converging movements demand the most skilful timing, and that any failure may lay the divided parts of an army open to the risk of defeat in detail. They say that with the tactics of envelopment it is not possible for a commander to keep a large force in his own hand after he has once decided on his plan of battle and has issued his orders. It will be by "keeping a considerable part of his force under control," the Regulations tell us, that a commander will be "in a position to take advantage of the enemy's mistakes and to choose his own moment for striking." To strike with the reserve at the right place and time is declared by the Regulations to be the course "most suited to the circumstances of our Army." Not much countenance, assuredly, is given by our Regulations to the tactics of envelopment.

The Memorandum is certainly a very interesting indication that some modifications in our tactical methods may hereafter be introduced, but so long as the Regulations remain unaltered we must take it that the decisive attack with the

more or less central and concentrated reserve remains the culminating act of the British battle. The general impression conveyed by these Regulations is that German tactics of envelopment are not suited to our Army, and that it will be less the considered plan of a British commander which will dictate the direction of the decisive attack than the enemy's mistakes, if he makes any, and the development of the preparatory action. In this theory there is a tendency to abandon the initiative and to allow it to be imposed by the enemy's will. As for the loss of control of forces deployed on a broad front, this is a disadvantage, if it is one, which the Germans accept without perturbation, persuaded as they are that the advantages which are inherent in the enveloping form of attack—that is to say, the tactics which won Sadowa, St. Privat, Liau-yang, and Mukden—far outweigh subsidiary disadvantages. A leader, wrote Count Schlieffen, can do no more nowadays than indicate to armies and army corps the direction of their advance and the points which they are expected to reach day by day. We ask of our generals that they shall do a great deal more.

The Training Memorandum also deplores the fact that there is a lack of appreciation of the principles governing the action of an advanced guard, and it recommends more vigorous action. Our advanced guards have certainly a very different mission from that which is given to such bodies by the German Manuals. We begin by saying that the advanced guard commander must have clear instructions about engaging the enemy if he is met with in any force, but this is easier said than done, for the action of the advanced guard must depend on the strength and situation of the enemy, and no clear instructions can be given before the circumstances are ascertained. We do not give our advanced guards the German *rôle* of protection only or mainly. We give them a vague mission, partly of reconnaissance, partly of attack, and it is not very wonderful that there is a lack of appreciation of principles which are so indefinite. What the Regulations, in so many words, ask the advanced guard to do is “to assist the commander

of the force in coming to a decision.” In fulfilment of this interesting mission a British advanced guard may indeed drive in or at least immobilize a German advanced guard, but will almost immediately find itself at grips with the German main body, and will probably bring on a fight in conditions not favourable to the British side. If the British commander has already found a difficulty in making up his mind, his indecision will not be mitigated by finding his advanced guard in serious trouble. Altogether better seems the German rule that the advanced guard should usually limit itself to the duty of protection and that the commander of the force should accompany his advanced guard. As to the strategic advanced guard, much in favour among our professorial element but less so now than formerly among their French *confrères*, this plan has a beautiful scaffolding of theory to support it, but requires leading very far above the average, and is probably destined in nine cases out of ten to lead to a beating in detail. Better seems the German principle of confining strategic advanced guards to the Army Cavalry. These are some of the preliminary difficulties of the system of tactics to which we seem committed, and they will certainly not be lessened in battle with the Germans when their enveloping attack, which our generals are not taught how to meet, begins to make its influence felt at the close of the preparatory phases of the fight.

FRENCH THEORIES

The French theory on the subject of the offensive battle is almost identical with ours, but, though the fact may prove of great advantage in certain contingencies, this does not obviate the necessity for inquiry. The French theory will be found very well and concisely stated in Articles 129 to 131 of the *Service des Armées en Campagne*, 20th Edition, 1910 ; in the articles which deal with the combat in the last issue of the *Règlement sur les manœuvres de l'infanterie* ; and in General Foch's admirable lectures delivered to the *École de Guerre*, notably those contained in his book *Des*

Principes de guerre, Chapters VI to XII. There are, of course, scores of other good treatises written by other eminent French officers, but the Regulations named and General Foch's book are sufficient to bring out the chief characteristics of the French system.

The French recognize three phases of the combat—*préparation*, *action décisive*, and *achèvement*. The phase of preparation is that during which the enemy is opposed, at all points where he appears, by the *minimum* of force necessary to hold, immobilize, and employ him, while keeping him all the time under the menace of a decisive crisis. The decisive attack, officially described as the principal act of the struggle, is allotted to the reserve, which is destined for a violent and concentrated effort on the decisive point. Another reserve, kept carefully apart from the emotions of the battle until its decision, is intended to complete a success or retrieve a failure. All or most of this is, in effect, our theory, but more tersely put. The necessity, which the French admit, though we do not, of meeting the enemy's troops wherever they appear is translated in practice by the use of mixed detachments of varying strength, which seek to impose upon the enemy and to keep him in play while the decisive stroke is delivered elsewhere.

It is clear that in this theory success or failure depends largely upon the choice of time and place for the delivery of the decisive attack. This is the personal affair of the commander, and the French evade the tremendous problem which it involves by describing it as an *œuvre de coup d'œil et de caractère qui ne peut être soumise à aucune règle précise*. What the French ask, and what we ask, is the Napoleonic improvisation after battle has been fairly joined, and this is not a talent which is given to many. The French theory demands the exercise of generalship amounting to genius, and no one recognizes the fact more fully than General Foch. The higher command, according to him, must be *une grandeur de premier ordre*. No victory, he says, is possible without a vigorous command, ready to accept responsibility, thirsting for bold enterprises, possessing and

being able to inspire resolution, and with all the will, judgment, and coolness which the situation requires.

In effect, whether on the whole strategic theatre or on the battlefield, these theories demand a skill in the command which is shown by history to be the appanage of but a few commanders in a century. They demand armies which can manœuvre and can move in more or less massed formations and with the utmost order and regularity, laterally and from front to rear, for the delivery of the decisive stroke on which all hopes depend. They assume good and precise information, or at least the genius for drawing correct inferences from contradictory evidence. They imply resolution and moral courage of the rarest kind. They demand from subordinates, when these are in command of strategic or strong advanced guards or mixed detachments, that they shall not be overwhelmed by superior forces. They ask these subordinates, by resistance or the *rupture du combat*, to prevent superior numbers from prevailing until the concentration, deployment, and assault of the reserve charged with the decisive attack have taken place. They ignore to some extent the fact that the concentration of masses of troops in a restricted area is in itself a misfortune, and that it leads to great trouble connected with the housing and supply of troops, especially in winter. It is a hard task that the French and English theories of the offensive battle set to the higher command.

The worst of it all is that these theories do not appear to be based upon experience acquired upon modern battlefields, and, indeed, General Foch, for a classic example of the decisive attack, has to go back to the combat of Saalfeld—that is to say, to the days when musket-balls had an effective range of under 200 yards. Concentration before battle and decisive attacks delivered within the front covered by the preparatory *combat d'usure* have had no luck in any recent wars. The decisive victories of modern campaigns have been gained by the tactics of envelopment, and although the decisive attack of the French and English theories may be delivered from a wing, it will not be easy

with modern armies to secure this flank position for the reserves if the army is concentrated before battle, and if the reserves have not been posted on the flank in the initial deployment.

THE RIVAL THEORIES

The German theories have, of course, certain disadvantages. A deployed line, especially of several armies, makes a change of direction, and still more a change of front, a delicate and difficult operation. The temporary displacement of lines of communication which ensues requires the most skilful collaboration of all subordinates to second the new dispositions of a general, and the management of trains and parks becomes exceedingly complex. Moltke's objections to a sudden change of direction without adequate motive in the operations preceding Sedan are well known. They were justified by the crowding which resulted on the road Pont-à-Mousson-Thiaucourt-Chambley, on which road were packed the ammunition sections and convoys of three army corps. The village of Chambley was on the route assigned to the 12th Corps and the Guard, and no proper precautions were taken to avoid the confusion which naturally followed. But, though the German Staff was not perfect on this occasion, it is certain that, thanks to the intelligent co-operation of all Staffs, affairs soon righted themselves. The German General Staff publication, *Heeresbewegungen im Kriege*, 1870-71, shows how faithfully the Germans have probed the causes of their minor failures. They have not seen fit, because such failures occurred, to abandon principles consecrated by experience. What they have endeavoured to do is to provide that these particular failures shall not recur. It must also be recognized that in these days when a front of deployment may extend along the entire length of a frontier the need for changes of direction and changes of front may not arise before the close of the period of the first great battles.

The German Staff would scarcely admit that a deployment in line of army corps or divisions at deploying intervals

will diminish the control of the higher command. The higher command in Germany desires to seize and preserve the initiative in war, and there is little evidence from recent campaigns to show that with these tactics the will and resolution of the higher command will not be exercised and demonstrated in every phase of the offensive operations which follow. In the German system the smallest possible dose of genius is required from subordinate commanders, who have only to march in the directions ordered, to reach certain points at certain days and hours, to keep touch, and to attack the enemy vigorously wherever he is met. In these days when armies may be commanded by chiefs without practical acquaintance with war it is no slight advantage to have worked out a theory for the conduct of the offensive combat which cannot fail to be well within the compass of the average chief, and is based on clear-cut ideas comprehensible to everybody.

As to the penetration of the front by the decisive attack of a massed reserve, this has still to be shown to be a practicable operation with modern arms. This great decisive attack which is the grand and culminating act of the French and British theories has scarcely the tribute of mention in any German Manual. Army corps marching at deploying intervals occupy in battle all the front at their disposal, and it is useless to cram more men into a front of battle than can use their arms. An army corps with 25,000 good rifles and 144 good guns can, as Count Schlieffen has urged, resist for long, especially with its flanks secured by neighbouring corps. If unable to resist it can retire, and every mile that it is forced back will make the decision by the troops charged with the enveloping attack more easy and more complete. A local success against the German front is not, of course, inconceivable, for in war everything is conceivable; but to suppose that such success will bring about the disruption of the entire line is to live in the days of Napoleonic fronts of battle. The larger the force devoted to the decisive attack on the front of the French or English battle, the less the force that can be directed to resist the

enveloping attack. What disastrous effect successful envelopment produces the last hours of Sadowa and the last days of the Battle of Mukden only too clearly show.

Nothing would be more gratifying than to believe that our tactics and those of the French are the best. But even the excellent French Regulations and the writings of General Foch, certainly one of the most brilliant of French officers on the active list, do not carry complete conviction, and if we regard theories such as those which General Lewal advanced in his *Stratégie de Marche* and *Stratégie de Combat* they positively make us shudder. In these latter theories we see excessive concentration, army corps of 60,000 men on a front of four miles, and despairing efforts made to reproduce in modern warfare tactics long since dead and buried. No ! These things are no longer practicable. The employment of dense masses within limited spaces is completely useless for all practical purposes in modern war, and no confident hope can be entertained for the success of armies which have not entirely recognized the fact.

NEED FOR RECONSIDERATION

The need for a reconsideration of our system of tactics emerges not only from a study of our theories, but from the practice of our Army. Those who have followed our manoeuvres in recent years have indeed seen much to admire, but have frequently remained at the close with a certain sense of disappointment. The higher command has often displayed a lack of grip ; and hardly once have we observed, in the collective action of our troops, that sum of co-ordinated effort which we have confidently expected from the admitted excellence of the several arms. We await each year the decisive attack by the general reserve, with all its majesty and tragic airs, but this keystone of the arch of the British battle is usually conspicuous by its absence, and we are constantly depressed by poignant disappointments. There is no *Leitmotiv*. If our Regulations have attempted to inspire one they have failed. Napoleonic improvisations are evidently much less catching than the influenza.

We are not well off for military literature of use to the higher command. We have no such volumes as those *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, begun in the year 1901 by the Great General Staff of the German Army. No Colonel von Moser has written for the service of our generals and staff a work on "The Handling of the Army Corps." Least of all has any General von Falkenhausen studied for us the problem of handling large armies on a theatre of war. An endeavour was made some years ago to start a Military Journal, but it came to nothing. Our General Staff distributes a fair amount of casual literature to troops, but without much discrimination or comment. It has, indeed, for some time past published quarterly a valuable survey of recent publications of military interest which contains the germ of a good idea, while the new departure made by the publication of the Memorandum on Army Training, 1910, is a sign of grace. But we need badly an organ which will enable the General Staff to disseminate its influence far and wide throughout the Army, and our staff possesses so many good officers that it is strong enough to display a robust belief in its capacity to teach. It is time that our General Staff became a living force in a living world and ceased to be the academical abstraction which it must remain until possessed of an organ which can give it a widespread influence throughout the Empire.

It is also advisable that the General Staff should prepare an authoritative paper exposing in all necessary detail the strategical and tactical theories of the German Army, and that our future Training Manuals, several of which are now in course of revision, should take more account than they do at present of the probable action of German troops upon the battlefield. Fate must not be tempted a second time by our neglect of the military customs of a possible antagonist. It might also be expedient to change the manner in which we draft our Training Manuals. Our Staff Duties branch is very well manned and does excellent work, but it would be better that new Manuals should be drawn up by strong committees of our most capable leaders in the manner

that the *Exerzier Reglement* of the German Infantry was produced. This system inspires great confidence, and the same fortune will befall our Manuals when they are known to be the work of our most eminent chiefs.

The excuse, advanced by our Manual, that the tactics of envelopment are only suited to forces with great numerical preponderance cannot be accepted. These tactics are used every year by German forces without any such preponderance. They are based upon the precepts and practice of Frederick the Great, who declared that by refusing one wing and by reinforcing the wing destined to attack the enemy in flank, 100,000 men might be beaten by 30,000. The idea that a weaker army is restricted to the defensive, and that only armies with great numerical preponderance can attack, is the most perverse and paralysing of all theories. This heresy must be extirpated from our doctrines at all cost.

In one way or another means must be found for combating the enveloping form of attack. It is certainly not by evading this problem that we can solve it, and in the end it will surely be found that combat is in all circumstances the most effective means for replying to this menace. Combat attracts all troops in the vicinity as honey attracts flies, and it is in the nature of average generalship not to deprive itself of reinforcement at a point where combat rages in order to complete an enveloping attack elsewhere. How and in what manner this combat should be directed against German columns is the problem which our tacticians are bound to solve. We must not let them ride off with generalities about concentration, strategic advanced guards, mobility, decisive attacks, and so forth, but must ask them to be good enough to set going the German columns on the war-game maps and on the manœuvre field, and to show us in a practical manner how best to combat them.

NEUTRAL FRONTIERS

Last of all, we must cease to play and toy with this urgent problem of the independence and integrity of the smaller

States of Europe in time of war. A dozen years ago there was reasonable hope that the neutrality of the small countries bordering upon France and Germany would be respected in case of a Franco-German war, but no one to-day any longer believes it. The tendencies of German strategy and tactics during the last few years almost preclude the notion that the German strategist will be content to run his head against a French line of battle in the three narrow *trouées* left open to a German advance. It is also possible that Switzerland may no longer stand outside the area of conflagration, and it is probable that in case of an Anglo-German war the preservation of the neutrality of the Netherlands will not remain an absorbing interest to German strategists.

How best to act, by land and sea, in case the pressing military and naval needs of Germany cause her to disregard the neutrality of the little countries on the flanks of the line of deployment of her armies, is a question to which the Defence Committee must have an answer cut and dried.

CHAPTER XVII

AUSTRIA AND ITALY *

THE military duties originally assigned to Italy by her partners of the Triple Alliance were, in time of war, to cover the south-west frontier of Austria, to detain a French army upon the Alps, and to fight for the mastery of the Mediterranean Sea. In other words, Italy's rôle was to enable Germany to attack France with better prospect of success, and to allow Austria, in case of need, to direct the greater part of her forces against Russia. In return, Italy obtained a policy of assurance against a French attack.

So long as her enmity with France lasted, Italy acquiesced, though without enthusiasm, in this arrangement. She does so no longer because Franco-Italian enmity is dead. Italy remains in the alliance business as a sleeping partner, but she has ceased to have much concern or interest in the management. Her aid is not expected with any confidence by her Austro-German consorts, neither is her hostility anticipated by France. The "enemy" of Italy to-day is Austria, her ally, and almost every measure of precaution by sea and land which Italy has taken for many years past has been directed against Austria. Similarly, Italy occupies a prominent place in the military anxieties of Austria, and much of the increase of Austrian garrisons in the south-west has been made at the expense of Galician defence. The Press of Central Europe has been filled for years past with accounts of moves and counter-moves intended to confer some military advantage upon one or other of these Powers to the disadvantage of its rival.

* By kind permission of Mr. Leo Maxse.

The diplomatic relations of the two States do homage to appearances, but scarcely veil the military antagonism which is written large across many Acts of the respective Legislatures, across every plan for roads and railways, every movement of troops, and every new plan of fortification. A speech like that recently made by General Asinari di Bernezzo, and an episode such as recently took place in a Milan theatre, show the trend of popular opinion, but were not needed to emphasize the deep-seated rivalry which exists between the allied Powers.

The military facts of the case are pretty well known to all soldiers who keep their eyes open, but are less well known than they might be to the British public. There is little or no secrecy about them, and I do not propose in this article to break any new ground, but only to follow paths already thoroughly surveyed by the military Press of Europe. Every movement of Austria and Italy is duly chronicled by this technical Press. The object of each move is discussed, and the proper reply to it considered in the most open manner. Manœuvres are held in the frontier districts on each side under strategical hypotheses which leave no doubt at all as to their meaning, while experts discuss the zones of concentration, the lines of advance, the number of troops and ships that can be engaged in a given time, and in short, all the moral and material resources at the disposal of the prospective combatants.

THE RIVAL NAVIES

Superiority at sea, though more necessary for Italy than for Austria, owing to the greater maritime surface exposed to attack on the Italian side, is very desirable for each Power. If Austria rules at sea she can seriously injure Italian trade, threaten Italian coasts, tie down many Italian troops to the defence of the peninsula and the islands, and protect the left flank of an Austrian army marching into Friuli from the Isonzo. If Italy is mistress at sea she can concentrate all her land forces to the north-east, neglect her peninsular and insular defences, move forward through Venetia, and

perhaps attempt a landing on a large scale on the eastern shores of the Adriatic. The character and scope of the operations which will be permissible for one Power or the other in case of war will depend very much upon the result of the conflict at sea.

The navy of Italy is numerically superior to that of Austria in ships, guns, and men, but this superiority is not so crushing as to deprive Austrian sailors of all fighting chances. With a Tegetthoff in command an Austrian fleet goes far. The tally of the Austrian Navy is not given in the Dilke return, but is given in the current number of *Brassey's Annual*. Commandant de Balincourt's *Flottes de Combat* for 1910, after eliminating ships without serious value, allows the effective Austrian fighting ships a displacement of 124,900 tons, and those of Italy 200,000 tons. It shows that the Italian ships have a great superiority in medium and light guns, and that Italy has 137 torpedo craft to the Austrian 72. Italy is also well ahead in her "Dreadnought" policy, and also in the construction of submarines and dirigible airships. The Italian Navy is a popular service, and has been fortunate to escape many of the discouragements with which the Italian Army has had to contend.

For naval bases in the Adriatic, Austria has Pola and Cattaro to set against Venice and Ancona, if indeed the latter can be dignified by the name of naval base. All these ports have disadvantages well known to everyone acquainted with their topography and existing defences. Italy, like Rome of old, from a maritime point of view faces west and south. Spezia and Maddalina have little influence upon a war in the Adriatic, and Italian ports in this sea, other than Venice, are very poor. Comacchio, Ravenna, and the Bay of Manfredonia have in turn been suggested as war-ports to make up for the defects of Ancona, Brindisi, and Taranto, but little has been done to adapt them. On the Austrian side, Sebenico and the Gulf of Sabbioncello have also been studied, but little has been done to improve them. It is Pola against Venice, but both Powers recognize that it will not be naval bases alone which will save them, but rather the

efficiency of their sea-going, submarine, and air fleets and flotillas.

THE RIVAL ARMIES

Austria-Hungary has a population of 50 millions to the 34 millions of Italy. Austria, with 1,700,000 trained men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-three, can place in the field at the outset of a war at least forty-eight divisions of infantry, giving, with other arms, 680,000 bayonets, 55,000 sabres, and 1,700 guns exclusive of Landsturm formations. Italy, with 1,000,000 trained men, aged twenty to thirty-two, has at most thirty-six divisions, including twelve of mobile militia, with 550,000 rifles and 21,000 sabres. Italy's constant loss by emigration makes it difficult to reckon the effective strength of her reserves. Out of the Austrian peace strength of nearly 400,000 all ranks, about 70,000 men are quartered on the Italian frontier, and of these no fewer than 20,000 have been added during the last six years. The clever use made of Ersatz reservists by Austria during the frontier troubles of last year, shows that it is easy for this Power to expand her effectives without formal mobilization. The peace strength of the Italian garrisons facing Austria is about 45,000 men, excluding garrisons south of the Po.

The two Austrian Army Corps on the frontier are the 14th and the 3rd, with head-quarters at Innsbrück and Graz respectively. Although all the garrison of the Tyrol must be considered mountain troops, it was not till four years ago that Austria created special troops for Alpine warfare and gave them the system of local recruiting and fixity of garrisons adopted by Italy in 1872 and by France in 1888. The exact rôle of the Austrian frontier garrisons in case of war cannot, of course, be stated, but the probability is that their main duty will be that of covering troops. In peace time they form a fringe along the frontier, while behind them are their reserves massed in groups of brigades at six different garrisons, namely, Trent, the upper Adige, Innsbrück, Klagenfurt, Laibach, and Trieste. The Italian frontier

Army Corps are the 3rd, 5th, and 6th, with head-quarters at Milan, Verona, and Bologna respectively. The chief garrisons are at these towns and at Brescia, Padua, and Venice. Alpine troops occupy the frontier, while other *Alpini* from the French frontier are brought across from time to time to learn the ground.

The Austro-Hungarian Army is recruited from races which are nearly all good, and some very good, value for military purposes. The army is well trained, flexible, and very fairly well equipped. It has completed its artillery rearmament with a good modern quick-firing field-gun, and has a useful mountain howitzer nearly ready, and plenty of Schwarzlose machine-guns. It has, by half as much again, a larger Budget than the Italian Army and a considerably more numerous corps of excellent officers. It has an annual contingent which, until two years ago, exceeded that of the Italian Army by 61,000 men, and still exceeds it by 26,000 men. It has a much higher peace establishment, namely, nearly 400,000 to the Italian 250,000 or less, and its moral force is solidly established. It is a good staying army with plenty of initiative, and will always make its mark if led by chiefs worthy of their men.

The Italian Army, taken as a whole, is an army of recent creation. It was only in 1871 that General Ricotti organized the army on a national basis, and since that date the pinch of finance has beset his successors at every turn. The army also suffers from organic defects. It is recruited on a national basis but mobilized territorially, and changes of garrison, on a regular roster, are frequent. A battalion may be recruited from Piedmontese, Tuscans, Romans, Neapolitans, and Sicilians, but when it is mobilized it incorporates its reservists from the district where it chances to be quartered, and low establishments due to straitened means require that two reservists shall be incorporated in mobilization for every serving soldier. Thus the battalion is completed for war, *Alpini* excepted, to the extent of two-thirds of its strength by men to whom the name, number, and officers of the regiment may mean nothing at all. It is not reasonable to

expect solid battalions from this system, which may have been necessary to consolidate Italian unity but has outlived its day.

Some of the military disadvantages arising from what Napoleon called the *vice radical* of Italy, namely, her geographical conformation, have been mitigated by the concentration in time of peace in the valley of the Po of a large part of the cavalry and artillery destined for the field army. But Italy suffers from inadequate communications and comparatively slow mobilization. The concentration of her field army in the north will not be a normal operation, and in many instances army corps will reach the frontier before the reserves. All these circumstances combine to make political prudence a necessity of Italy's military position. Italy has much more need of earnest and sustained preparation for war than of bellicose harangues which may drive her unready into war.

The number of picked troops in the Italian Army is far too high, amounting in all to sixty-five battalions of *Alpini*, *bersagliere*, and grenadiers out of a total of 282 battalions. The best of the annual contingent finds its way into these favoured corps, and the rest of the infantry suffers from the fact. Artillery affairs have also been badly muddled, and Italy is not only backward in her re-armament but is also tributary to Krupp, as are so many of the unwise minor States. Promotion in the army is deplorably slow, and the corps of officers has been seriously discouraged by the loss of interest of Italians in their army, while the lower ranks have been much dissatisfied with their lot. The Legislature is making a valiant effort to repair the neglect of the past, and is endeavouring to follow up some of the excellent recommendations made by the commission of inquiry which has recently investigated the condition and complaints of the army, but it is easier to damage than to restore the efficiency of armed forces. The Italian soldier is sober, handy, and enduring, but, the Piedmontese aside, he is not by nature a man-at-arms, and the army as a whole is insufficiently permeated through and through with the enthusiasm and confidence that win victories against odds.

THE FRONTIER

The events of 1866 gave Venetia to Italy, but left Austria in occupation of the crests of the Alps and the heads of the principal valleys. From Switzerland to the Julian Alps the frontier follows the crest of the hills at an elevation of 7,000 to 10,000 feet. A mountainous zone some thirty miles broad separates the frontier from the Venetian plain. Except in the valley of the Adige there are few facilities for the movements of masses of troops across this part of the frontier. Between the Julian Alps and the Adriatic the character of the frontier changes. The ground gradually falls, and there are no uncommon obstacles to prevent the advance of a strong Austrian army into Friuli on a broad front.

The Tyrol juts out like a bastion into the Lombardo-Venetian plain. On its western flank three roads cross the frontier between Stelvio and the valley of the Adige. The eastern flanks of the bastion are more accessible and the broad valley of the Adige leads northward into the heart of the Tyrol. Between Kreutzberg and Tarvis the Carnic Alps are not crossed by any roads fit for wheeled traffic.

RAILWAYS

Austria has one double and three single lines of rail leading to the Italian frontier. Three of these lines lead towards the Isonzo, and only one to the Tyrol by Innsbrück and the Brenner Pass. The Püsterthal railway connects the two fronts of deployment, but is too near the frontier to be safely used for the purposes of strategic concentration. Important ameliorations of this railway system are now in progress; for example, narrow-gauge lines to improve the local network of the Tyrol and other lines of normal gauge to increase the facilities for deployment near the Isonzo on the line Villach-Göriz. In this latter quarter detraining stations have been organized in modern style, and in this district 60,000 troops were recently assembled for manœuvres.

Italy has also three lines for a concentration on the line of the Brenta. The railheads for this purpose would be

Chioggia, Padua, and Vicenza. For a more forward concentration in Venetia there are only two lines. With the exception of certain portions of one of these lines the railways are of single track. Like Austria, Italy is endeavouring to improve her railway equipment, and has devoted large sums since 1905 to increase her plant and to double certain lines so that a timely advance to the line of the Tagliamento may become practicable. These new railways should be completed by 1912.

FORTIFICATIONS

On the lower Isonzo Austria has no fixed defences, but near Tarvis a group of strong works bars the way to the valley of the Save. The Carnic Alps defend themselves, but from the Kreutzberg to Switzerland every accessible line of approach has its barrier fort, usually consisting of an armoured work in some commanding position for long-range fighting and of an auxiliary barrier in the valley armed with quick-firing and machine-guns. Nearly all the Austrian forts have armoured cupolas, and their armament includes from six to twelve guns and howitzers of medium calibre. Armoured observatories, powerful searchlights, underground cables, and signal stations aid the defence. Besides the exterior line of forts, the Tyrol has a group of works at Riva, another at Franzensfeste to protect the railway junction, and finally a powerful fortress at Trent which serves as the keep of the Tyrol and is surrounded by a strong girdle of batteries and armoured forts. This is a good enough system from the engineer's point of view, but it has the disadvantage of disclosing in some measure the scheme of defence, and it is usually true that an isolated barrier fort is of little utility when the assailant's artillery comes up.

Italy has replied to the Tyrol batteries by a series of works intended to bar the exits by the chief roads. Verona on the Adige is a more ambitious place. It is the reply to Trent, and is surrounded by a girdle of forts pushed well out from the town. To the north-east there are the so-called zones of assembly in the upper valleys of the Astico, Brenta, and



THE AUSTRO — ITALIAN FRONTIER.

Piave, while north-eastward again come works at Agordo, Piave di Cadore, Vigo, and Osoppo. There are no modern fortifications east of the Tagliamento. There is little armour in these Italian forts, but a number of cupolas have been ordered, and will in due course find their way into the works. On this frontier the old quadrilateral of pious memory has disappeared. Venice and Verona protect the flanks of an army assembled on the Brenta. The adventures of Venice upon land have not always been to her ultimate advantage, but with her modernized defences and many heavy batteries she pretends, in a war on this frontier, to play a distinguished part on land and sea.

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The circumstances of the moment, that is to say, the pre-occupations which may prevent one Power or the other from bringing its whole strength to bear, can alone determine the exact conditions in which an Austro-Italian war will be fought. Provided that Austria is not threatened by any other great Power, an offensive campaign against Italy must be anticipated, even though Servia and Montenegro take part on Italy's side. In this case it is probable that, after detaching adequate forces to overawe these smaller States, Austria will assemble her main army upon the Isonzo, will advance rapidly into Venetia, and will look to the garrison of the Tyrol to cover the right flank of the army. The first shocks between the main armies, other than cavalry and advanced guard affairs, may in this case occur between the Tagliamento and the Brenta. The result of these conflicts will decide the subsequent march of events.

The rôle of the Austrian garrisons of the Tyrol is to hold out against assaults until the main Austrian Army approaches the Brenta, and then to come down from the hills and combine with the main attack. The events of 1866, in which year General von Kuhn with 16,000 men victoriously resisted Garibaldi with his 40,000 volunteers, show that the Tyrol has good capacity for resistance. Von Kuhn published many years ago a little book which was a masterly

exposition of the principles upon which the defence of a district like the Tyrol should be conducted, and it is on von Kuhn's lines that the future defence of this district will not improbably be carried out. The threatening aspect of the Tyrol bastion leads some to suppose that it may become the sally-port of the main Austrian attack, but the inferior railway communications, the sparse means for feeding and moving masses of troops, and the divergent directions of the valleys which lead into Italy, do not greatly encourage this belief.

The nature of the case and the tendencies of Italian aspirations render an assault upon the Tyrol, and especially upon the Trentino, highly probable. Historical precedents, as well as common sense, show that an army advancing through Venetia to the north-east is bound to secure its left flank by clearing the hills. Italian successes in this enterprise are not excluded during the first weeks of a war, for a convergent attack from three sides is allowed by the number and direction of the roads of approach. But, if the pressure of the main Austrian Army is felt in Venetia before the assailants of the Tyrol have secured a decision in their favour it may go hard with the Italians, and the larger the numbers sent against the Tyrol the smaller will be the main Italian Army and consequently the less its chances of victory in the decisive fights. It may be assumed that three weeks are at the disposal of Italy for this enterprise before the Austrians will be on the Piave in much strength. If again the Italians are successful at sea and are beguiled into the dream-strategy of a maritime expedition across the Adriatic, this will be so much to their disadvantage and so much the less weight at the decisive point.

It is useless to speculate upon events after the collision between the main armies, but there is this to be said in Italy's favour, namely, that national armies are most formidable in their own country. To reap the full advantage of this fact, which may be more strongly brought out in future wars than it has been in the past, it is indispensable that a nation should not be discouraged by Trebias and Trasimenes, but should

realize that every step in advance adds to the invader's difficulties and increases the chance of successful defence.

The real difficulties of Austria should begin when her armies reach the lines of the Adige, the Mincio, and the Po, and these difficulties may be turned to good account by Italy if she keeps a good heart and secures for herself decisively the command at sea.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE JAPANESE ARMY *

AFTER the signature of the Treaty of Portsmouth, the Japanese Army did not rest upon its laurels. Thanks to developments during the war, and to subsequent efforts, the army became quickly possessed of resources which doubled the strength with which it began the war against Russia. Nor was Japan content with this advantage. The military laws now in operation, should they be carried out in their entirety, are calculated to give Japan a mobilizable and efficient force of 1,638,000 fully trained soldiers within a period of eighteen years from now. These great forces, provided that Japan, by her own efforts or by means of her alliances, can hold the sea against all comers, are destined to make her for as long a time as can be foreseen the dominant Military Power in the Far East. Japan is for us a priceless ally, but so also is England for Japan, for alliance with no other Power in the world could compensate Japan for the loss of the support, distant and invisible though it may be, of the British Navy. Thus the Anglo-Japanese Alliance rests on the firm basis of mutual interest, which is the most enduring of all foundations for international accords. Before British and Japanese critics of the alliance oppose its renewal in the year 1915, they must consider well the military consequences involved in its abandonment. For both Powers the consequences would be serious.

RECRUITING

The Japanese Army, in almost every respect, is based upon the best European model, and especially upon the

* From *The Times*, Japanese Supplement, July 19, 1910.

model of the German Army. Service is personal, universal, and obligatory upon every Japanese citizen from the age of seventeen to that of forty. The number of youths who annually reach the military age is now about 550,000 for a population of about 50 million souls. Service begins during the year which follows that in which youths reach the age of twenty. After a severe medical examination there is a ballot among those classed as very good for service, in order to make up the annual contingent which is fixed by Imperial Decree and now numbers 120,000 men against the 17,000 of the year 1888.

Youths taken for the contingent pass two years with the colours in the case of Infantry and three years in the case of other arms. They then belong to the Yobi or reserve of the Active Army, until the age of twenty-seven, then to the Kobi, or *Landwehr*, for ten years till the age of thirty-seven, and finally to the Kokumin or *Landsturm*, till the age of forty. The large additional numbers of trained men which will be found in future will be due to several causes. First and foremost, of course, to the large increase of the annual contingent. During the war, an Imperial Order of September 29, 1904, also increased Kobi at the expense of Kokumin service, and extended the former from five years to ten. In 1907 two years' service was adopted for Infantry, while during and after the war no less than six divisions were added to the thirteen existing when the war began. These changes, the steady growth of the population, and the perhaps temporary use of the Hoju or *Ersatz* reserve system, have greatly expanded, and must hereafter still further expand the military power of Japan.

The Hoju system is the part of the Japanese organization which is least well known, and may not prove permanent. As in Germany, it serves, of course, as a reserve of recruiting, and enables waste in each annual levy to be replaced during the year. But the practice has also been hitherto—at all events up to last year—for each regiment to incorporate and constantly train 150 men of this Hoju for three months, and to replace this draft by another

and a similar one immediately afterwards. The men of the Hoju thus have ninety days training with the colours, and they are in principle subjected to sixty days further training during their second and third years' service. This system is adapted to the speedy provision of a very large number of partially trained men, and no doubt served at first to provide quickly the numbers which Japan required for her enlarged army. But it is believed that the Hoju men have not been subjected in practice to the training laid down after their three months' colour service, and it is possible that as the present two years' colour service begins to accumulate a large and well-trained reserve the Hoju training may be dispensed with altogether.

The Hoju men belong at present to the Geneki, or Active Army, and to the Yobi, or Army Reserve, till the age of twenty-seven, when they pass into the Kobi simultaneously with their contemporaries of the contingent.

As for the Kokumin Hei-Eki, or *Landsturm*, this includes all youths between seventeen and twenty and all those up to the age of forty classed as good for service or dispensed from service for reasons other than physical unfitness. This category is at present untrained. It forms a reservoir of some 3,000,000 men who can be drawn upon hereafter in case of emergency, but need not be considered in the effective force.

The organization of the territory is based upon that of the divisional unit. Each division has an area of country allotted to it, and from this area it draws its recruits in peace and its reserves on mobilization. There are eighteen divisional districts. The two divisions detached in Manchuria and Korea retain their districts in Japan. The Guard alone is recruited from the whole territory. In each divisional district the country is divided up into Infantry brigade, regimental, and battalion areas. Other arms are recruited from the divisional district as a whole or from appointed portions of it, while army troops are allotted special and larger areas. Taiwan (Formosa) has a special garrison, and so have the islands of Tsushima, Saghalien, etc. The

total number of troops quartered outside Japan, not counting the two divisions in Manchuria and Korea, is about 34,000, including 10,000 Manchurian railway guards.

PEACE AND WAR STRENGTHS

The peace strength of the Japanese Army is about 220,000 men. The Infantry company numbers 156 all ranks, the squadron 140, with 135 horses, the field battery 128, with 62 horses, and the company of Engineers 170. The Infantry regiment is 1,950 all ranks in peace, and the Cavalry regiment 462 with 454 horses. The division at peace strength numbers 11,000 all ranks.

In war Japan can count at present upon the services of about 28,000 officers. Of these there are 10,300 in the Active Army, besides 1,600 probationers and 2,000 warrant officers. The Yobi and Kobi officers number between 13,000 and 14,000, and there are about 1,000 officers and cadets at the various military schools and colleges.

Excluding officers, the Japanese first line is now approximately 538,000 strong, including 267,000 Yobi or army reservists. The Kobi, or *Landwehr*, is about 318,000 strong, giving a grand total of 856,000 fully trained men. The number of men partially trained in the Hoju is uncertain, but is placed by some competent people as high as 1,337,000 men. There are no data available for testing the accuracy of this latter figure, but it is certainly high. The total number of trained and partially trained men is apparently higher now than the number of fully trained men will be when the existing organization works itself out during the next eighteen years.

HORSES

Japan has imported large numbers of Australian horses since the war, but not enough for her requirements, and the supply has been supplemented by half-bred horses known as *zashu*. These are by foreign sires out of country-bred mares for the greater part, and they are chiefly bred in the Aomori

district and in Hokkaido on Government stud farms. These *zashu* are preferred by officers to the pure Australian ; they are reported to stand the climate better, and to be more easily handled. The total number of horses in Japan is about a million and a half, including 12,000 imported and 170,000 half-bred horses. There is a drastic law in existence for the registration, classification, and requisition of horses and wagons on mobilization, but horses are not a strong point of the Japanese military system. Race meetings are discouraged, officers are forbidden to attend them, and totalizators are banned and declared illegal. It does not pay to own a blood-horse in Japan. Bushido and the bookmaker consort but ill.

MILITARY FINANCE

The Japanese Army Estimates for the financial year 1904-05 amounted to £4,151,539. The cost per man was then £10 12s. per annum, and the pay under three farthings a day. The war cost Japan close on 200 millions. By 1907-08 expenditure upon the army had increased to £11,394,220. It was just under 11 millions in 1908-09, and by rigorous economy may be kept within these limits for a time. The military results obtained by the Japanese with these exiguous resources are among the wonders of the age, nor apparently is anything kept back from the public, for even the sums expended on secret service are duly published. Financial exigencies have compelled Japanese soldiers to postpone or reduce expenditure in various directions, but under those heads which concern fighting efficiency there has been no retrenchment. Japan's expenditure has increased, but so have her resources. It was always the expectation of her statesmen that the war would ultimately pay itself out of expanding resources due to victory. To complain because Japanese labour naturally controls the markets which are nearest to it is to desire to deprive Japan of the fruits of victory.

ORGANIZATION

Except that six divisions have been added to the active army since the war, and two brigades of the independent Cavalry, there has been little change in the grand lines of Japanese military organization during recent years. The division remains, as before, the largest unit of the war organization. The division consists of head-quarters, including Staff and *adjutantur* ; two brigades of Infantry, each of two regiments of three battalions ; two squadrons of Cavalry ; thirty-six field guns ; twenty-four machine guns ; three companies of Engineers ; a bridging train ; a telegraph section ; medical corps ; eight ammunition columns ; four supply columns ; four to six field-hospitals, and a mobile remount dépôt. The mobilized active division has 18,875 men, 4,938 horses, and 1,765 carriages.

There are now nineteen of these divisions, including the Guard. In addition there are the army troops. These number four brigades of Cavalry, each of three regiments of five squadrons ; two newly formed batteries of horse artillery ; three independent brigades of field artillery, forming six regiments, with 216 guns ; three independent mountain battalions, with fifty-four guns ; four regiments of heavy field artillery ; siege parks ; railway troops ; wireless and other telegraph units ; balloon company ; searchlight detachments ; bridging train ; and field *gendarmerie*. There are also troops for lines of communication ; twenty-four battalions of heavy artillery for coast defence, besides the garrisons, already alluded to, outside Japan.

Allowing a Kobi brigade to each division, the organ of the French General Staff calculates that the mobilized active army will number 570,000 men with 122,000 horses. It certainly was the practice of Japan in her last war to add a Kobi brigade, in most cases, to her active divisions. But the fast-growing military resources of Japan scarcely allow us to expect that this practice will in all cases be followed hereafter. Now that the contingent of the year is 120,000 men and that the Kobi will soon possess ten of these

contingents, it is not open to us to suppose, even after allowing for waste, that this category of the army will in future, or even now, only supply nineteen brigades of some 6,000 men each. It is much more probable that the Kobi will supply nineteen complete divisions at least, and it is possible that these nineteen divisions may already be available, if the Hoju is drawn upon to complete them, although they may be twenty-five per cent short in Cavalry, and fifty per cent short in Artillery, compared with the standard of the active army.

The use of reserve field armies is one of the very few remaining secrets of the higher command. The Japanese may add Kobi brigades, or divisions, or eventually larger bodies, to the active divisions; or they may form Kobi armies entirely distinct; or they may prefer some totally different arrangement. The tendency in Germany of late has been to trust mainly to the highly trained active army, and not to swamp it by the infusion of elements of inferior value. As the Japanese follow German ideas with great faithfulness, it is possible that they may hold similar views. It is also evident that the circumstances of a future war will largely govern Japanese action in this matter, and that as the numbers of fully trained men increase there may be alterations in the general plan.

In the last war the Japanese created four or five armies, and this will doubtless be the practice again, but there exists no permanent arrangement of the divisions into armies and there are no Army Staffs. The Emperor is the supreme head of Army and Navy and directs in war the combined operations of these forces through his Head-quarters Staff. He is then assisted by the Board of Marshals and by the Military Council which includes the chief officers of Army and Navy and certain other selected officers. The Army in peace is governed by three departments—namely, those of the War Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Director of Military Education and Training. The chiefs of these departments are independent of one another and directly under the Emperor. It is not necessary to describe

the War Office and General Staff systems, for these follow very closely the German patterns. In the division there is General Staff, *Adjutantur*, and Intendance, and, as with us in India, the divisional general is responsible for administration, and his chief Staff officer superintends all the business of the command.

MOBILIZATION

The act of mobilization in Japan is arranged on the same lines as in Europe. The reserves are called out, dépôts formed, and reserve formations prepared on the required scale and in the orthodox manner. The Japanese arrangements for mobilization are believed to be very complete. In 1904 the first divisions mobilized were allowed ten days for their preparations, and this was found to be ample. Reservists now set out for their destination at 6 a.m. on the second day of mobilization. It is expected that the first troops will be ready to entrain or embark on the seventh day of mobilization, that the entire first line will be ready between the twelfth and the eighteenth days, and that the dépôt troops and Kobi formations will be ready between the twentieth and the twenty-fifth days.

MILITARY TRANSPORT

The length of lines of rail open to traffic in Japan rose from 2,950 miles in 1898 to over 5,000 miles in 1907. There is a fair amount of rolling stock, including about 35,000 railway carriages and some 2,000 locomotives. Japanese lines give about one half the results of a good Western railway from the point of view of troop transport. The plan of transport is revised yearly, and the general principles, march-graphics, and so forth, are similar to those of Europe. Japanese mercantile transport is increasing fast. The year before the war about five and a quarter million tons of Japanese mercantile transport cleared in Japan, whereas in 1907 the figure rose nearly to nine million tons. A system of bounties has encouraged shipbuilders and merchants. while

the State keeps control for all purposes in war. Embarkation is frequently practised and also disembarkation in harbours and on an open beach. The regulations allow one ton per man for the transport of troops by sea, and four and a half tons per horse. It is probable, given the same precautions that were taken by Japan before the last war, that the existing amount of mercantile shipping under the Japanese flag would allow the entire active army to be carried to the mainland or elsewhere in two *échelons*, and that the first *échelon* of ships would be ready for sea as soon as the troops were ready to embark.

ARMAMENT

The Japanese Infantry is in course of re-armament with the 1905 or so-called 38th year rifle, which is practically the same weapon as that with which the army fought in the war and gives practically identical ballistic results. It is a strong and serviceable rather than a delicate and highly finished arm. The old carbine has also been converted and is now sighted up to 2,000 mètres. The Field Artillery still possess the 31st year Arisaka steel gun, but is being re-armed with the 38th year model constructed at the Osaka Arsenal from Krupp patterns. This gun is a quick-firer, calibre 2·95 in., weighing 34½ cwt. behind the teams. It fires a shell weighing 13½ lb. with a range of 6,783 yds. with existing fuzes and ammunition. With fixed ammunition the extreme range is 9,295 yds., and the fuze is said to burn up to a range of 8,749 yds. The shield is of steel, ·118 in. thick. It extends over the wheels and has a hinged portion below the axle-tree. The supply of these guns appears to have made good progress, while a mountain gun, taking the ammunition of the new field-gun, and having a range of 5,500 yds., is said to be in process of completion.

The new heavy gun of 10·5 c., or 4·134 in., was made at Osaka by General Arisaka from a Krupp pattern. It weighs 44½ cwt., or nearly 52 cwt. behind teams of eight horses. The initial velocity is 1,770 f.s., and the range 10,936 yds. It fires a 40 lb. projectile and carries a shield of almost the

same thickness as the new field gun. Other guns in use with heavy batteries are the 4·7 in. and 5·9 in. howitzers. In coast batteries the idea appears to be to limit armament to three types only—namely, the 5·9 in. quick-firer, and guns of 27 c. and 30·5 c., but at present these batteries are for the greater part armed with older guns of some fifteen different types.

The Japanese adopted the Hotchkiss machine-gun after the war and ordered 1,200 of these useful weapons in 1907. They are of the same calibre as the Infantry rifle—namely, ·256 in.—and fire the same ammunition. They are sighted up to 2,187 yds. They have an all-round traverse, and are fired upon a tripod mounting. Their defect is that they are much too heavy for ordinary Infantry work, as they weigh 70 lb., or 100 lb. including tripod.

CLOTHING AND WAR MATERIAL

The field service dress of the whole army is now khaki colour, cloth in winter and linen in summer. The head-dress resembles the Russian pattern.

The chief military arsenals are at Tokyo and Osaka. The first turns out small arms and S.A.A., and includes four powder factories. Osaka deals with guns and gun ammunition. At Uji, which is attached to Osaka, smokeless powder is manufactured. The clothing factory is at Senju, a suburb of Tokyo. Uniforms are made up regimentally.

EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINE

Military education is based upon German models. There are District Preparatory Schools corresponding with *Kadetten-schulen* ; a Central Military Preparatory School on the lines of the *Hauptkadettenanstalt* ; there are Officers' Schools resembling the *Kriegs-schule*, and besides these there are the Staff College, the Toyama Tactical School, the Cavalry School, and other schools for Artillery and Engineers. The education given is thorough and the discipline very strict.

FORTIFICATIONS

The Japanese do not waste money upon fortresses. They possess not one. The landward defences of Port Arthur remain as they were when the siege ended, and not a shilling has been expended upon them. On the other hand, the coast defences of the home territory are well maintained, and a law exists to define the duties of Army and Navy in relation to them. The chief coast defences are those of the Inland Sea and of Tokyo Bay. The four passages into the former are strongly defended, while Kure and Sasebo have defences of their own, and there is also a Central Position within the Sea. Tsushima, Nagasaki, Maizuru, and Hakodate are also fortified. In general, these works are powerfully armed, and in some cases they are armoured. The Japanese are not misled by theorists into the belief that for an Island Power with great possessions oversea a navy is sufficient for security.

GENERAL REMARKS

The supreme advantage possessed by Japan as a military Power is that, thanks to national service, her home territory is unassailable, not only by any single enemy, but by any reasonable or unreasonable combination of enemies. Her navy is sufficiently formidable to deter any Power except England from the idea of attacking her in her home waters, and her two fighting services in combination, joined with her geographical position, assure to her a predominant position in the Far East. Nothing but the military regeneration of China or the United States seems likely to deprive her of this privileged position—and to talk to a Japanese of such possibilities only provokes a smile.

Japan is already twice as powerful as she was when she challenged Russia in arms. She intends to be thrice as powerful, and nothing but an external cataclysm or some internal convulsion of which there is yet no symptom, or scarcely none, can prevent her from becoming so. The weight of her numbers, the excellence of her organization,

the adequacy of her armament, the skill of her staff, the science of her officers, and the splendid spirit which animates, not only the Army and Navy from top to bottom, but the whole nation, have no exact counterpart, whether in the New World or the Old.

Were these mighty forces ever employed upon aggressive war, Japan would shake Asia to her foundations. Employed as they are to serve as the guardians and the guarantees of peace, and directed as they are by prudent policy and wise statesmanship, their influence remains beneficent, and they ensure for the Far East the element of stability which it has long lacked.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DUTCH DEFENCE BILL *

A CRITICISM

THE Kingdom of the Netherlands occupies a geographical position of much importance in relation to two possible campaigns—namely, first an Anglo-German war, and secondly, a campaign in which Germany and France are the protagonists.

In the first case the coast of the Netherlands lies immediately on the flank of the most direct route between the Thames and the Elbe, and it is of primary importance, both to England and to Germany, that Dutch territory, ports, and resources should not be placed at the disposal of the enemy. We can but re-echo the sentiments expressed by the *North German Gazette* on July 28 last—namely, that “we cannot remain indifferent if a great Power at war with us uses the Netherlands as a base for its fleet, because this base is in dangerous proximity to our coast.”

In the second case—namely, war between France and Germany—indications point with increasing force to the possibility that Germany may find herself compelled for military reasons to disregard the neutrality of Belgium and to direct her main attack upon France through Belgian territory. In this event the position of the Netherlands on the critical flank of the German line of deployment makes it a military necessity for Germany that this flank shall be secured, whether by Dutch preparation if this can be relied upon, or by a German occupation in the contrary event. At the same time the interest of France, and of her friends and

* From *The Times*, December 19 and 21, 1910.

allies, is that the Netherlands shall keep all comers out, and shall not, on any terms, or on any pretext, permit a German occupation of Dutch territory.

These important and in some respects conflicting interests of powerful neighbours place the Dutch in a position of considerable difficulty which must be fully acknowledged. The chief interest of Germany is that Dutch coast defence should be amply secured, while the chief interest of England and France is that neither pretext nor opportunity for a German occupation should be afforded, and consequently that the eastern defences of the Netherlands should be strong. To give this double satisfaction, to hold the balance equally between rival groups of Powers, and yet to remain within moderate bounds of expenditure, is the very delicate problem which confronts Dutch statesmen in relation to defence.

THE DUTCH DEFENCE SYSTEM

The existing plan of defence passed the States General in the year 1874, and up to the moment of the presentation of the Defence Bill of this year it has been steadily adhered to. The plan of 1874 substituted a concentrated for a dispersed defence. It made use of existing waterways and of facilities for inundation in order to defend a restricted area, which, though unavoidably leaving to the enemy a large part of the national territory, included all the chief centres of commerce and of population. North and South Holland, parts of Zeeland and Utrecht, and a very small section of North Brabant are included within the defended area of which Amsterdam is the centre and the keep. This town has been protected by a girdle of forts, works, and lines, destined to be completed by inundations in time of war.

The rest of what is known as the Holland Fortress is defended by lines or groups of works facing east, south, and seawards. Facing eastward there are certain defences, or prepared positions, notably the line of the Yssel, intended to protect a retirement from the extreme frontier upon a position in Gelderland and Lower Betsowe, known as the Grebbe Line, which extends from Spankenburg on the

Zuider Zee to Grebbe on the Rhine and thence to the Waal. If this line is forced, the defenders will fall back upon the Utrecht or New Holland Water Line, which is the chief defensive position against attack from the east.

The left of the New Holland Water Line rests on the Zuider Zee, where it is closely connected—thanks to Naarden, Muiden, and adjacent works—with the defence of Amsterdam. The line of defence and of inundation follows the course of the Vecht to Utrecht, and thence the Vaartsche Rhine to the Lek, whence it continues to the Waal at Gorkum, and is thence prolonged to connect with Gertruidenberg. The most important part of this line—namely, that between Muiden and the Lek—is divided into four separate basins of inundation, artistically arranged so that a suitable depth shall be preserved throughout.

The lands and polders to be inundated are, here as elsewhere, all known, and the area of inundation is limited to the strict *minimum* for defence. In principle, the inundations will be fresh water. If an enemy captures the Grebbe Line and seeks to divert the water of the Rhine into the Waal in order to compromise the defence of the Utrecht Line, the latter can be supplied with salt water from the Zuider Zee, and this supply is controlled by the Muiden sluices. The use of salt water for inundations will be avoided if possible.

The South Water Line, which defends the southern side of the Holland Fortress, is a natural barrier, mainly formed by rivers which are both wide and deep. The chief *rôle* in the defence of this barrier falls to the active forces of Army and Navy, which will find good support in the armoured forts of the Hook of Holland (Nieuwe Maasmond), in the fortifications of Helvoetsluys, Willemstad, and Gertruidenberg, and in the minefields.

THE MARITIME FRONTIER

The maritime frontier is defended, in the main, by three separate groups of works—first, the Helder position covering the Texel and the chief entrance to the Zuider Zee; secondly,

the Hollandsch Diep and Volkerak position ; and lastly, the works on the Western Scheldt. The Helder is defended by a chain of forts and batteries bearing upon the channel and the sea, and backed by the armoured fort of Haarssens. A successful attack at this point would have to be followed up either on land or by making use of the Zuider Zee. In the first case the assailant would soon be brought up short by the northern defences and inundations of Amsterdam. In the second case, vessels of not over $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet draught would be required. These would stand no chance against the eastern defences of Amsterdam, while the Zuider Zee is full of shallows and cannot be navigated without danger unless local pilots are employed.

The Helder position is connected with that of the Hollandsch Diep by the armoured forts of Ymuiden and the Hook, which command the entrances to the Amsterdam and Rotterdam ship canals, which alone on all this coast give admission to ships of deep draught. The coastline from the Texel to the Hook has a shelving foreshore, which presents inconveniences for landing operations. As to the Hollandsch Diep, the waterways leading to this position from the sea are encumbered by a mass of shifting sandbanks, which cause a continual alteration in the channels and the positions of the buoys. At the best these channels only admit vessels of light draught, while the removal of the buoys would make navigation dangerous and slow. A naval attack from this side would have to take count of the defences of Helvoetsluys and Willemstad. These preliminary difficulties overcome, the army of the assailant would have to cross a triple barrier of rivers defended by the Dutch Army and the flotilla, and as not less than 170,000 men with 156 field-guns may be in occupation of the Holland Fortress the attack must be made with numbers considerably larger than those of our mobilized Expeditionary Force.

As to the defences of the Western Scheldt, these have hitherto been restricted to two unimportant works at Neuzen and Ellewoutsdyk, which are held as a matter of convenience for the purpose of affirming Dutch sovereignty, but stand



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE DUTCH DEFENCES.

entirely outside the system of concentrated defence, and consequently have hitherto received little attention.

STRENGTH OF THE COAST DEFENCES

From all these and from other considerations it results that an attack upon the Holland Fortress from the side of the sea is one of the most improbable, unprofitable, and uninviting operations that can well be conceived. Great, therefore, must be the surprise of everyone acquainted with the Dutch defence system to find that the Preamble of the new Defence Bill declares that the object of the new measures is to ensure the country against attacks and violations of neutrality from the side of the sea, that is to say, from the side on which defence is most complete, and that not a word is said of the eastern defences, which have been for long and notoriously neglected. Instead of suggesting that the defence of the Holland Fortress as a whole is the chief interest of the country, the Bill confines itself to the maritime frontier where the Dutch are strongest, and lays down the principle that the Netherlands "should be able to dispute with energy the occupation or use of its ports, estuaries, and maritime communications by belligerent Powers." This is certainly a very desirable object in itself, but it is one which happens to have been already secured by long and costly preparation, whereas the eastern defences have been long neglected and are not secure.

"There is not a soul living," wrote the *Amsterdammer* in August last, "who is not aware whose interests are served by the defence of our maritime frontiers." From the trend of debates in the States General and the comments of the Dutch and Belgian Press, one of two conclusions appears legitimate, either that Germany has given the Netherlands Government some sufficiently clear indications of German wishes, or that false and misleading reports of the intentions of England and France have been received from tainted sources by Dutch Ministers and have thrown them off their customary balance. A third hypothesis—namely, that the

Dutch intend to range themselves openly on the German side in case of an Anglo-German war—is not tenable owing to absence of proofs and must be discarded.

Very explicit assurances have been given by Dutch Ministers that no actual pressure has been exercised by Germany in this affair ; but it still seems most unlikely that the Dutch Government would have made such large demands upon the taxpayers, especially when the ink of the North Sea Agreement was scarcely dry, without some very plain hint of German wishes, little to be distinguished from commands. Whether justifiable or not, the impression made by these proceedings is that Germany, in one way or another, has raised the question of the Dutch coast defences in order to have a pretext for occupying the Netherlands in case of war with England. If Germany is not satisfied with the present state of the Dutch coast defences, neither is she likely to be satisfied with anything that the Dutch can do to improve them. The combination of a numerous army compulsorily recruited, an efficient flotilla for coast defence, and forts with armoured turrets for the protection of all accessible points is one which amply suffices for its purpose when judged in relation to the natural strength of the Dutch position against attack from the side of the sea. Certainly it may be an act of prudence on the part of Dutch statesmen to deprive German statesmanship of every shade and shadow of an excuse for occupying the Netherlands in time of war, and with this end to impose upon the Dutch people burdens which would otherwise be needless ; but, though Dutch good faith is not in question, the impression derived from the imposition of these burdens is decidedly unfortunate.

ATTACK FROM OVERSEA

The terms of the Preamble of the new Bill make it necessary to affirm that no thought of making use of Dutch ports or Dutch territory in time of war for any naval or military purpose whatsoever has ever been entertained by anyone in England. This conclusion is not a personal opinion, but arises from a study of the general situation. The British

Navy is not suited for service in such shallow waters as the Zuider Zee, the Haringvliet, and the Volkerak, and no ships are being constructed for operations in such waters, where the very suitable Dutch naval forces, composed of coast-defence vessels, gunboats, destroyers, and submarines, should have things very much their own way. The idea which has been suggested to the Dutch by the Germans, that we shall use Dutch waters and harbours as a base for naval action against Germany, is a patent absurdity. These things may have been possible in the days of Blake and de Ruyter, but modern navies have need of an immense plant and special resources and reserves of all kinds which do not exist outside their national harbours. There is no Dutch port or arsenal which would be of the slightest use to our Navy in a war with Germany.

Neither do we, or can we, contemplate any military operation through Dutch territory. The small size of our Expeditionary Force prohibits such an operation if we are acting alone, while the armies of France and of Russia, were one or both of these Powers acting with us, will have quite enough to do on their own frontiers without wasting their strength upon a secondary, objectless, and eccentric operation, good at the best for the advocacy of some pedant at a war course.

Our Dutch friends tell us that they have to contemplate the possibility of a German attack by sea. But the difficulties which present themselves to a British or a French attack upon the Holland Fortress from oversea are not diminished if Germany is the assailant. Moreover, though the Germans are prepared to run great risks when no other course is open to them, no such necessity arises in the event of action against the Netherlands. Apart from the manifest danger of attacking the Holland Fortress by sea while the British Navy remains unbeaten, it is not clear why Germany should accept the risks of the sea stroke, while the natural line of attack of a continental Power—namely, the land route—remains open to her. If the hypothesis of a German attack by sea stands at the base of the new Dutch plan, we

must decide that the Dutch Staff has lost something of its perspicacity, and it is sufficient to suggest such a thing in order to reject it.

WEAKNESS OF THE EASTERN DEFENCES

It must be admitted that, if the inundations are in place before an attack takes place, if the Dutch Army is mobilized betimes, and if a Power supreme at sea keeps open the communications of the Dutch with the outside world, the defence of the Holland Fortress might be continued successfully for an almost unlimited time. But with ifs and ands we could place the Holland Fortress in a bottle. It is unfortunately the case that the fixed defences of the New Holland Water Line have been neglected, and that for years past little or nothing has been done to strengthen them. There are only the same old forts and the same old guns, for the greater part quite out of date and not susceptible of long resistance. In favouring circumstances the inundations would supply the necessary impenetrability to all this system; but in the first place the inundations, however perfect theoretically, are untried; in the second place, the Germans are powerful and near; and in the third place, the Government Department known as the Waterstaat is not controlled by soldiers, and will in all human probability act too late.

Except for a paltry sum voted in the Dutch Estimates for 1909-10 for the improvement of the means of inundating the Utrecht Line, nothing whatever has been done of late for this vital element of Dutch defence, and it has indeed been announced that no money will be allotted for its improvement or for barrier forts on the eastern frontier. Upon Amsterdam there has been a good deal of money laid out, but here again the policy of defence has recently changed, and the money is being spent, not upon the southern portion of the position, which is all-important, but upon the northern portion destined to resist an oversea attack. For a long time past, in short, the Dutch have entirely neglected their eastern defences.

THE DEFENCE BILL

The Dutch Defence Bill demands an outlay of £3,200,000 upon coast defences and the Navy. As this expenditure is not much less than the total annual charges for Army and Navy combined, it is, relatively speaking, high. About one-third of the amount will be spent upon the Navy, while of the remainder there will be £1,271,000 for fortifications, including cupolas, searchlights, and rangefinders; £351,000 for guns, £435,000 for ammunition, and £13,000 for mines.

It is proposed to strengthen the defences of the Helder, Ymuiden, the Hook, the Goeree sea approaches, the Hollandsch Diep and Volkerak, and to provide most of these defences with 28cm. guns of forty-five calibres. For the Western Scheldt entirely new fortifications are designed at Flushing, where the defences are to be "raised to the level of modern means of attack." The money for the Navy will go towards the construction or purchase of eight sea-going torpedo-boats, fourteen armoured coast-defence vessels, two submarines, and mining plant.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Bill has been coldly received throughout the country for public opinion is not assured of its necessity. The discussion of the Bill was fixed for November 8, but when this date arrived the Ministerial project encountered considerable opposition. The Preamble of the Bill stated that the proposals of the Government were based upon a report by the Defence Committee, but only a few copies of this report were issued to the Second Chamber, and these were only open to examination by members under a pledge of secrecy, a procedure not much in consonance with Parliamentary customs. Two hostile motions were immediately made, the first inviting the Government to publish the report in whole or in part, and the second refusing to examine the Bill until the main contents of the report had been made public.

Had the report in question been of a more or less normal

character it would have been easy for the Premier, Dr. Heemskerck, to have stated frankly and concisely the military reasons which underlay the proposals of the Government. But, on the contrary, he struck a melodramatic attitude, intrenched himself behind the cover of State secrets, and declared that it was a crime punishable by the Civil Code to publish documents interesting the national defence. Despite this attitude, the States General refused to be stampeded or even impressed. Both the haste displayed by the Government and the mystery with which it seemed anxious to enshroud its plans appeared incomprehensible, and in the end the Government found itself compelled to promise, at a later date, a written statement of the reasons for the Bill. Frequent allusions to the Bill have since been made during the discussions of various departmental estimates, but the full-dress debate on the Bill itself has been postponed till after the recess, and will probably not come on before the middle of February next.

THE EXPLANATORY NOTE

The promised explanation was published on December 12, in the form of a Note signed by the Minister of Marine and by General Cool, Minister of War, who has since resigned office on account of a hostile vote upon his Estimates for the year. This Note is more remarkable for what it leaves unsaid than for what it says. There is an introduction which contains unexceptionable platitudes on the subject of defence generally, but no reasons are given for the concentration of Dutch interests upon the coast and for the entire neglect of the Army and the eastern defences.

In reference to the Navy the Note declares that a certain number of ships of larger size are indispensable for active defence, and it is claimed that their existence will force an enemy to detach heavy ships for an enterprise against the Dutch coasts "and thus weaken his fleet elsewhere." This admission is illuminating. Apparently the Dutch Government anticipates co-operation with another Power against an enemy and desires to weaken this enemy's fleet. Whose

fleet is this ? If it is ours, the Dutch should turn over the pages of their histories and ask themselves whether they have ever gained advantage by playing with fire with such rare imprudence.

As to Flushing, it is admitted that the object is to compete with a hostile armoured fleet, and again it must be asked, whose fleet is this ? It is said to be the intention to construct "strongly armed, independent, and impregnable" fortifications at Flushing, and foreign susceptibilities are lulled by the assurance that these works "will create no new conditions with regard to Dutch international obligations." As, however, the "closing of the channel" is mentioned among the objects which Flushing is destined to achieve, the control of the Western Scheldt is certainly one, if not the main object in view, and on this matter other Powers may have something to say.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PROPOSALS

The Government plan naturally divides itself into three parts—first, the expenditure upon the Navy ; secondly, that upon the coast defences of the Holland Fortress already described ; and lastly, the defences of the Western Scheldt, which represent a more or less new policy and have given rise to serious concern in Belgium and in France.

So far as the naval proposals are concerned, these call for no criticism except the remark that they might more conveniently have been embodied in the Estimates of the year. The Dutch have a useful little fleet for the purposes of coast defence, including some fifty torpedo craft of good quality, while Dutch canals enable these latter vessels, and many of the other ships, to combine their action at any given point off the coast. Just as the Dutch ships in the old wars drew so little water that they could often escape in shallows where we could not follow them, so now the moderate draught of the Dutch fighting ships, combined with a respectable armament, places them in a good position for the defence of estuaries and inland waters. A naval attack upon the Netherlands requires ships of a very special type, and the

best proof that no Power contemplates such attack is the fact that no such ships are being built.

The proposals for strengthening the Helder, Ymuiden, the Hook, Goeree, the Hollandsch Diep, and the Volkerak and the absence of parallel proposals for defending the exposed eastern frontier, display absence of balance and impartiality, but are at all events concerned with the defence of the Holland Fortress and consequently follow the plan of 1874. Kykduin, the outermost fort of the Helder position, faces seawards and is evidently intended in future to fight on level terms with the most modern battleships. Its future heavy guns and armoured turrets will render it better able to perform this service than the present fort. No less than £752,000 is to be spent upon the Helder position. Heavier armaments at the other points will by so much increase the local capacity for resistance. But it may also be pointed out that these works will represent a heavy charge upon Dutch taxpayers without profit, for the Dutch coast-line is long and many points must always remain undefended by works. We threw an army ashore close to the Helder in 1799 out of range of the batteries of that place, and what has been done once can be done again. It is not immobile defences which best protect a coast-line, but a sea-going navy, or, failing that, a numerous and efficient field army. If the army of an assailant coming from oversea is superior to the garrison of the Holland Fortress, these new defences will do nothing to turn the enemy from his purpose, and if the enemy's army is not superior he will not come at all. The Dutch defence scheme does not add a single rifle to the garrison of the Holland Fortress, and it is consequently, for the greater part, money expended in pure waste.

FLUSHING AND THE SCHELDT

The proposals for the defence of the Western Scheldt apparently indicate, despite official denial, a new departure in Dutch policy, and as, in the general opinion, they are aimed at us, they require a careful examination. It may be

said, of course, that the unimportant works at Ter Neuzen and Ellewoutsdijk already protect the Western Scheldt in some measure, and that Flushing a fortress will be a difference in degree only and not in kind. It is certain that the Dutch are very sensitive about their sovereignty over the lower Scheldt and will resist to the last any attempt to question it. This sovereignty is undisputed, but it is subject to two conditions—first, the commercial freedom of the river, and secondly, the right of the Powers which have guaranteed Belgian neutrality to make use of the river for the purpose of succouring the Belgians if their neutrality is threatened.

It is not a matter of doubt that an international river like the Scheldt, although subject to the rule of free navigation so far as commercial traffic is concerned, still remains an integral part of the territory of riverain States. Consequently if the Dutch like to line both banks of the river within their borders with a continuous chain of forts, or whether, on the contrary, they prefer to build none at all, are matters of domestic policy which concern no one but the Dutch. But the use to which the Dutch propose to put such defences, if they are made, naturally concerns—first, the freedom of commercial navigation; secondly, the support of Belgium by the guaranteeing Powers or by any one of them; and thirdly, the usefulness to the Belgians of Antwerp as a citadel and a base.

The suppression of the Scheldt tolls in 1863 was one of the greatest triumphs of King Leopold I, and it is not probable that Belgium and other interested Powers would have paid over to the Netherlands the sum of 32,276,566*f.* to secure the freedom of the river had it been thought possible that this freedom would subsequently have been threatened by means other than tolls.

BELGIAN NEUTRALITY

As to the use of the Scheldt by one or more of the Powers which have guaranteed Belgian neutrality, it seems clear that, though the Netherlands, by the engagements of 1839,

did not expressly guarantee the independence and neutrality of Belgium, they certainly recognized them, for, by becoming a co-contracting party to the Treaty by which the Powers undertook formal and explicit engagements towards Belgium, the Dutch implicitly agreed not to place obstacles in the way of the execution of a treaty in which they had participated. Such eminent authorities in international law as Baron Descamps in his *Droit de guerre* and *Neutralité de la Belgique*, Baron Guillaume in his *L'Escaut depuis 1830*, and Professor Ernest Nys in his *L'Escaut en temps de guerre*, published last week, all uphold this point of view. The sovereign rights and neutral duties of the Netherlands can neither suppress nor supersede the rights and duties of Powers under treaties which the Dutch have recognized, nor can such Dutch rights legitimately be used to obstruct these Powers in the exercise of rights and duties conferred upon them by express and binding agreements.

The unofficial Dutch and Belgian points of view in this matter are absolutely opposed. The Dutch Lieutenant-General den Beer Poortugael in his recent pamphlet, *L'Escaut et la neutralité permanente de la Belgique*, declares that the Netherlands have not only the right but the duty of opposing the passage of ships bringing succour to Belgium by the Scheldt. This thesis, replies the Belgian Professor Nys, is false. It takes no count, he says, of the general principles of international law, it is in flat contradiction with the rules which the Great Powers have proclaimed in relation to the Scheldt, it revives pretensions which have been buried for over a century, and it neglects the formal text of treaties. Both of these authors are members of the Institute of International Law, and General Poortugael was a delegate of the Dutch Government at the first Peace Conference.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SCHELDT

The official Dutch reading of their obligations will doubtless be brought out very fully when the Defence Bill is debated, but so far as this opinion can be gauged a fine

distinction appears to be drawn between support sent to Belgium by the Scheldt while Belgian neutrality is only threatened, and similar support sent after this neutrality is violated and Belgium has consequently become a belligerent. In the first case the support will apparently be allowed to pass, and in the second not. In this case a Power sending troops to Antwerp by the Scheldt may find half its force refused admission and the other half virtually blockaded in the river by the Dutch. Belgium and her backers are thus to be penalized by an act of aggression committed by another Power. As the proposed construction of a fortress at Flushing may enable this point of view to be upheld by arms in a manner scarcely possible with the existing defences of the Western Scheldt, the question is by no means academic and may become one of a very practical and pressing character. It seems probable, in any case, that if Dutch official opinion is as here described it will entirely fail to commend itself to Belgian authorities on international law.

It may be said, from the purely military point of view, that the Scheldt is not the only means of access to Belgium from overseas for the troops of the guaranteeing Powers, and that Ostend and Zeebrugge are available for the purpose. This is correct ; but it would be more convenient to carry all the stores and impedimenta of an army up the river so as to avoid breaking bulk, and to be deprived of the river-line as a means for continuous reinforcement and supply would be a distinct disadvantage for the Power concerned. Moreover, denial of the river route shuts out from Belgium the aid of naval force, and would therefore, according to Belgian interpretation of the law, be a distinct infraction of treaty rights. The Dutch, some years ago, gave free passage to German torpedo-boats to ascend the Rhine through Dutch territory, although the Germans had no rights to urge in the matter. Permission granted to a Power without any rights is thus to be withheld from Powers apparently possessed of them.

THE FLUSHING SCHEME

By no means do these considerations close the question of the Flushing fortress. Flushing a fortress, and a fortress almost wholly useless to the Dutch, will always be regarded as a needless burden imposed upon the Netherlands, as a pistol aimed at England, as a slap in the face for Belgium, and as a derogation from the Dutch system of concentrated defence established in 1874 and never departed from for thirty-six years until this day. The Dutch point of view is that the fortification of Flushing is just as important an obligation as the defence of any other part of the maritime frontier, and the fact that Flushing is outside the Holland Fortress does not, in their opinion, alter this obligation in the least. In this case we must suppose that Flushing is only a beginning, and that in the end a ready-made suit of Dutch armour will be prepared, too big for the Dutch themselves, but not too big for a Great Power to step into. If it is necessary to defend Flushing in order to prevent its occupation, the same thing must be true for North and South Beveland, for Schouwen, Tholen, Goeree, and Overflakkee, as well as for the fringe of islands which borders the coasts of Friesland and Groningen. It is easy to begin the fortification of a coast-line once a basic and national plan of defence is abandoned, but it is less easy to know where to stop.

It is also necessary that England, the foster-mother of the Belgian kingdom, should not ignore the very serious effect which the Flushing scheme will have upon Belgian defence. The choice of Antwerp as the Amsterdam of the Belgian system of concentrated defence was largely based upon the consideration that the Scheldt would always be open to the arrival of reinforcements from England, and that the Antwerp base would always be secure and accessible to British troops. It was also obvious, at all events at the time when the choice was made, that the independence and integrity of Belgium were almost as much a Dutch as a Belgian interest. Had any other view been taken, and had it been thought possible that the Dutch would make use of

their control of the lower Scheldt in order to revive pretensions calculated to paralyse Antwerp and to hinder the despatch of British reinforcements by the river-line, it would rather have been Ostend that would have commended itself as the best place of refuge for a Belgian army unable to keep the field in face of overwhelming numbers. Great sacrifices have been made by the Belgians of late to make Antwerp strong, but if the sea communications of the place are no longer secure in time of crisis the value of Belgian efforts will be greatly depreciated. Already we see Belgian Staff officers writing about reopening the Scheldt by force of arms in combination with a friendly fleet. If, somewhere at the back of the Dutch scheme, there was a design to embroil the Netherlands with their neighbours, this design has been shrewdly worked out.

NORTH SEA STRATEGY

We cannot afford to have any surprises sprung upon us in the North Sea, and least of all by the Netherlands. During our first three wars with the Dutch no less than twelve fleet actions took place within an area limited by a line drawn from Yarmouth to the Texel on the north, and from Hastings to Cape Gris Nez on the south. The possession of very inaccessible bases gives to the small but efficient navy of the Dutch an influence upon events in the North Sea out of all proportion to its numbers. The maritime position occupied by the Low Countries is of supreme importance in the event of an Anglo-German war, and it would add immensely to our difficulties, and to our Navy Estimates, were this position to pass into the hands of Germany, or to be controlled by some mediatized State of the German Federal system. It has not been shown that any considerable part of the plan of the Netherlands Government, except that relating to the Navy, is of any serious utility for Dutch defence, and it has been shown that a part of it is detrimental to Belgium, whose security we have guaranteed. The Flushing scheme has been described by the Dutch ex-Minister of War, General Staal, as useless to the defence

of the country. The plan is well adapted to create bad blood between Belgium and the Netherlands and to arouse the suspicions of certain Great Powers. No interests but those of Germany will be served by its adoption.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Dutch would do well not to cherish any illusions on the subject of their Defence Bill because the British Government has raised no objection to it, and because our Press has said little upon the subject. It is not the practice of a British Government to concern itself with the domestic affairs of independent States. But assuredly the question of the Scheldt will have to be examined by our official experts when the position of the Dutch Government stands fully revealed, and the Press will have its say when the interests involved in all this matter are understood.

Our sole interest is to see that the independence and integrity of the Low Countries—the Netherlands and Belgium alike—are irrevocably maintained, and that nothing shall be done to diminish the security of a little country whose neutrality we stand sponsors for. It is unfortunately the case that little in the Dutch Defence Bill appears to serve Dutch interests. It confines effort mainly to the coast defences, already strong by nature and by art, and entirely neglects the eastern defences, which are notoriously weak. By the Flushing fortress it reduces the value of Antwerp to Belgium and appears to contest the right of the Powers which have guaranteed Belgian neutrality to use the Scheldt in execution of their treaty obligations. The plan serves German interests almost alone. It represents the first step in a downward path for a hitherto independent kingdom whose friendship is dear to us and whose interests are largely bound up with our own. Inevitably, if by a slow process, the tendencies to which the Dutch Government have given way will end by involving the Netherlands in an Anglo-German conflict, and in this case the results of the new plan will be precisely the contrary of those which must be desired.

Nothing is gained by the plan commensurate with its cost, its disadvantages, and its risks.

The Dutch and the Belgians between them might raise with ease 500,000 men who could, acting in unison, defend their concentrated positions with success. They could render it dangerous for any Power to interfere with them at the beginning of a war, and uninviting at its close. This policy requires fresh affirmation of Dutch-Belgian solidarity, and a departure from an attitude of pure negation on the part of Great Powers whose vital interest it is to preserve the independence of the Low Countries.

CHAPTER XX

THE HOME ARMY OF OUR NEEDS*

IN the House of Lords on Monday last, April 3, Lord Roberts brought forward his motion on the defences of the Empire, and supported it with a vigorous speech. The terms of the motion were "that in view of the altered strategic conditions in Europe, the House views with grave and growing concern the inadequate military arrangements of his Majesty's Government for the defence of this country and of his Majesty's oversea Dominions." This motion was carried to a division and accepted by the Upper House ; ninety-nine peers voting for it and forty-nine against.

What are the altered strategic conditions in Europe, and have they or have they not reduced the measure of our security ? They are, the great increase in the number and in the military value of foreign navies which renders possible combinations against us which were not possible before ; the enormous increase in the mercantile tonnage of German ships, and especially of the tonnage and carrying capacity of the most modern types of liners which enable great expeditions oversea to be conducted with a smaller number of transports and with greater ease ; the steadily growing power of Germany and of her allies on land and sea ; the practically stationary situation of the French population and military power ; the seductions which German diplomacy exercises over the smaller States of Western Europe ; and, last but not least, the masterful ambitions of the German Empire which dominate the entire political situation

* From *The Times* of April 7, 1911.

of the European continent and are a perpetual menace to peace.

THE BALANCE OF POWER

At the close of the debate Lord Curzon stated that the doctrine of the balance of power, by which he understood the resolve to prevent any dangerous predominance of any individual Power on the continent of Europe, was still, so far as he knew, part of the accepted policy of this country. On the truth or the inaccuracy of this conclusion almost everything turns. Very insidious attempts are constantly being made to turn us from a policy which has been the one great, unchanging, and dominating principle of our foreign policy since England became a nation. If it is still our policy, then readiness to help our friends by land and sea, to resist any Power which aspires to the hegemony of Europe, and to take up and support the good causes of the small Powers, is and remains a primary duty of our armed forces, and according to their fitness or otherwise for this duty they must be judged. If it is not our policy any longer, then sooner or later isolation, with all its consequences, must be our fate. Modern States have no use for fair-weather friends, and in face of coalesced Powers we shall have to consent to vast sacrifices which no statesman can contemplate without the deepest anxiety.

Few among us underrate any longer either the moral and material strength which Germany has gained by the self-sacrificing discipline of her people, or the profit which she acquires from the vigour and resourcefulness of a foreign policy backed by arms. Neither with a standstill in armaments nor with obligatory arbitration in any form will the governing classes in Germany have anything to do. That might be right, that the weak are the prey of the strong, and that *vae victis* is the only epitaph worth inscribing upon the tomb of the vanquished, remain the political doctrines of the school of Bismarck. We have no reason to be anything but grateful to the German Chancellor for reminding us of the fact in his crude but forcible speech.

But before we change a military system which is the result of a long process of evolution, and is the best, on the whole, for the workaday service of our oceanic Empire, let us at least be sure what it is we need ; and let us examine for one moment the military conditions of the hypothesis which would find the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente arrayed in opposing and belligerent camps. We shall find that we have some compensations to set against the German power. Geographically we occupy a far stronger position against Germany than we did against the despots and conquerors whose ambitions we formerly thwarted by our resistance, and Germany occupies a far less commanding position against us than ever did France and Spain. If we had to choose a country which would be hostile to us and would be endowed with all the moral and material strength which Germany possesses, we would rather select the territory occupied by the German Empire as the seat of this hostile State than the territory of any other Great Power in the world.

The naval pressure which we can exercise upon a hostile Germany is difficult to exaggerate. A long maritime peace in European waters has caused men to forget the influence which is exercised upon military events by maritime pressure, and this influence is almost completely ignored by the vast majority of continental soldiers. Naval power must be seen in operation again before its value can be properly appreciated by this generation. The vast development of the seaborne trade of Germany offers a large surface of exposure ; our home territory stands like a portcullis across the whole of the routes of German seaborne trade ; while in many parts of Europe superiority at sea may turn potential enemies into neutrals and directly or indirectly affect the course of a war. This naval superiority we possess, and it alone makes our alliance a pearl beyond price.

Nor can we consider the military situation of Germany on land as exceptionally brilliant. Strategically considered, the military position of Germany is, in fact, detestable, exposed as she is to attack by two first-class Powers of

great military strength. The French Army is numerically powerful, perfectly organized, and ready for immediate war. The Russian Army has a peace strength equal to that of the three Powers of the Triple Alliance combined, and the Russian Government is taking energetic steps to improve the quality of its mobilized armies and their facilities for secure strategic concentration. So long as the Powers of the Entente hold together and support their diplomacy by armaments equal to their population and resources, it would be dangerous for Germany and her allies to challenge them. While recognizing to the full the perfection of German military preparations, we must not remain blind to the fact that the Franco-Russian forces are certainly a most important, and perhaps an effectual, counterpoise to those of Germany and her friends, and that not even a Moltke could venture to forecast the issues of a contest waged by forces so nearly balanced.

THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

It is true, however, that the comparative tardiness of the concentration of Russian masses, and the harmful influence which certain seasons of the year may exercise upon the mobility of Russian armies, render it not impossible for Germany, in certain eventualities, to come to close grips with France before the weight of Russia begins to tell. The preservation of France from an attack of this character is absolutely vital for our subsequent security. Consequently it is indispensable that we should be able and ready to send a thoroughly efficient force to aid France, of such numbers that they may, as far as practicable, compensate for the difference between the mobilizable effectives which France and Germany can respectively place in First Line, and thus prevent France from being overwhelmed before her Russian ally can take the field.

It is a hard thing to secure general recognition of the fact, but the fact is none the less true, that the prompt despatch of a sufficient contingent to aid France against German aggression is an indispensable necessity of the times, and that

failure to take this action will entail upon us far heavier burdens subsequently. From this text few statesmen preach. The modern democracy has yet to prove that it can sustain the position won for England in the world by her fighting aristocracy of old. It is harder still to induce the public to accept the personal sacrifices and the burdens which this policy would entail if pursued to its extreme and logical consequences. No nation in the world has ever created and organized military force mainly for the protection of another nation. Every country creates the armed forces required for its own defence, and then engages in the cause of an ally such forces as it possesses and for what they are worth. The value of any Power as an ally depends upon the quality and quantity of its armed forces, but no ally, or potential ally, can venture to dictate what these forces should be.

But, if we shall find insuperable difficulty in organizing and despatching a force at all comparable with those of the great military States, we have the power, if we care to exercise it, of giving to an ally military assistance of great moral and material value, without any fundamental dislocation of our existing arrangements. On June 1 of last year we had 10,604 officers and 251,481 other ranks qualified for service abroad, after the usual deductions on account of age, service, and sickness ; and the gross numbers at home, including Regulars, Regular Reserve, and Special Reserve, were at the same date, 336,315 all ranks. If the defence of our home territory can be assured by the Navy and the Territorial Force, it is open to us, without making any drastic change, but only by introducing certain alterations of detail, to despatch an Expeditionary Force 200,000 strong and to maintain it in the field during six months of war.

The despatch of such a contingent, combined with the support of our Navy, which would give the mastery of the sea to our friends, would make us a valuable ally to any Power. It would entail no disruption of our existing system, and it would harmonize completely with the general requirements of the defence of our Empire. Nor need we stop at

this figure. It is legitimate for us, as our population and resources expand, to build up gradually a larger Expeditionary Force. It is not prudent, when every other nation increases its strength year by year, to accept any policy which does not foresee a steady increase of offensive power as population, wealth, income, and revenue expand. Our Regular Army, when existing service periods work themselves out, will be a far superior weapon to the short-service armies of the Continent, and will not be one which will break in a commander's hand.

It is impossible to accept any of the alternative plans for an Expeditionary Force which have been proposed by various patentees, or have been adumbrated in the recent debate. The original plan of the National Service League did not add a man to the Expeditionary Force, but only aimed at a better training and larger numbers for the Second Line. The writer regrets that the League shows signs of abandoning this position. After examining the plan outlined in Part II of *Facts and Fallacies*, the writer entirely agrees with what Lord Haldane and Lord Lucas said of it. This plan would convert the Regular Army into a Colonial Army, an act which would destroy its character and its strength. It would entail a heavy outlay upon pensions, and, according to Lord Haldane, would cost forty millions a year. It would involve the unpopularity of almost lifelong service abroad and thus return to the fatal mistakes of pre-Cardwell days. It would require at least 70,000 voluntarily enlisted recruits, although last year we could only find 26,434 for the Regular Army. All that can be said for this scheme is that it is quite certain to produce chaos and quite uncertain to produce anything else. Well advised indeed was the Field-Marshal to dissociate himself and his League from it in a note. The plan, like another worked out with much skill and ingenuity by Professor Spenser Wilkinson in his *Britain at Bay*, would destroy the existing Expeditionary Force and replace it after a dangerous period of transition by a Militia of *cadres* and recruits, totally unfitted to contend on level terms with the soldiers of Europe.

Every other scheme of the kind which has yet been produced is equally cursed by the disadvantage that it supplies us with a weapon greatly inferior in quality to that which we now possess.

Our reformers must start from the standpoint that nothing less than two years of colour service will do for any army which is to fight on level terms with foreigners on the continent of Europe. We have no right to suppose that we can work miracles and produce in one year the results which Germany, with all her intensive training, can only produce in two or three. What chance is there that the public will agree to anything like two years' service on compulsory lines? There is absolutely no chance, and everyone knows it. Therefore in Heaven's name let us have done with fanciful schemes for military deterioration, and let us steadily improve in numbers and efficiency the very admirable Regular Army which we possess, an army which is not only suited to our peculiar circumstances but can also be made to serve the cause of an ally.

TERRITORIALS AND INVASION

The plan of the Territorial Force rests on certain assumptions which may be right or wrong, but must at least be taken into account. These assumptions are that our supremacy at sea in home waters is maintained, and that the Force will be embodied and be in hard training before the last man of the Expeditionary Force has left our shores. We can take it that if there is a sudden call upon the whole of the Expeditionary Force the last man of it will in principle have sailed within three weeks from the first day of mobilization or thereabouts. We may not have fought an action at sea before the army sails, for our enemy may not choose to risk an action; but our fleets will long before that time have assembled at their war stations, and any errors in distribution will have been remedied. If, on the other hand, an action has taken place at sea during the first week of a war, we shall either have won or have lost it. If we have won it our security will naturally be greater. In the

contrary event, the Expeditionary Force will not sail and will be available at home.

The plan of the Territorial Force rests, in short, upon the assumption that it will only undertake unaided the land defence of these islands if supremacy at sea is ours, and the navy undertakes that it will destroy any hostile expedition of or over 70,000 men. These assumptions are not accepted by everybody ; but, such as they are, they represent the opinion of the Defence Committee, and it is useless to set up a Committee of this kind and not to accept the conclusions which it forms with a full sense of responsibility.

The real question is then—Is the Territorial Force competent to undertake unaided the land defence of these islands in the absence of the Expeditionary Force, and to defeat invaders not more than 70,000 in number ? It was an answer to this question which Lord Derby in an excellent speech demanded from the military authorities, and added that if the answer was “ Yes ” he would accept it. No answer to his question was given during the debate. It must be recalled that the figure for the establishment of the Territorial Force was settled in 1907, and that it was not till two years later that the Defence Committee arrived at those conclusions regarding invasion which at present hold the field. As these conclusions multiplied by seven times the previously estimated number of possible invaders, we have all the more reason to ask whether the General Staff considers the establishment of the Second Line adequate, and, if not, what establishments they require to ensure home defence in the absence of the Regular Army.

This is no unreasonable request to make. Many of us, and Lord Roberts among the number, do not place any confidence in the limitations imposed by the Defence Committee upon the possible numbers of invaders ; but, if we accept the decision of the Committee against our judgment, we have the right to ask that the conclusions which the Committee have explicitly formulated shall be rigorously enforced by military preparation. Lord Roberts asks for a million men. The writer considers an establishment of

600,000 necessary to carry out the conditions assumed by the Defence Committee. The view of the General Staff is unknown. It is true that there will be a good number of Regulars and Special Reservists left in the country after the sailing of the Expeditionary Force ; but very few of these will be fit for anything more than garrison work, as they have no means for taking the field, and the Special Reserve will be subject to continuous depletion to make good the losses of the Field Army.

The Government cannot afford to leave in doubt either the number of Territorials which is required or the amount of training which they should receive. The General Staff exists for the purpose of giving expert advice on questions such as these, and the conditions of the problem have been stated by the Defence Committee and have been brought within clearly defined bounds. There is also a growing impression that even the present strength of the Force will not easily be maintained during the next two years ; and to any considerable loss of strength we could not remain indifferent. It passes the wit of man to understand how Ministers can expect Territorial recruiting to be kept up when they fill the country with assurances that it cannot be invaded. The opinion of a great many firm friends of the Territorials is that compulsion in some form will have to be used to fill the ranks of the Second Line ; and all that need be added is that the organization of the Force was originally based upon population, and that it affords an admirable stem on which to graft any system of compulsion that the country will accept.

Another reform upon which Government and Opposition might profitably combine is compulsory cadet training. Lord Haldane had to drop his proposals on this subject when he brought in the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill, for had he not done so the Bill would have been wrecked ; but there is now better hope of success, and the Secretary for War has promised his personal support for the plan. Nothing better can be suggested to arrest physical deterioration of the people, to inculcate drill and discipline in the

rising generation, and to supply the Territorial Force with recruits capable of taking the best advantage of their brief periods of field training.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

From the debate in the Lords and from the general trend of opinion elsewhere certain conclusions may tentatively be drawn. First, that the Regular Army and its Reserves should not be fundamentally altered, but should be steadily improved and expanded on existing lines with a view of the provision of an Expeditionary Force 200,000 strong. Secondly, that compulsory cadet training should be introduced. Thirdly, that the number of Territorials required to defend these islands in the absence of the Expeditionary Force should be stated by the General Staff; and that these numbers should be found, if voluntary enlistment fails, by county quotas or by any other means that the wisdom of Parliament may prefer.

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